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5 Cents.

WILD WEST

WEEKLY.

YOUNG WILD WEST AND THE SERVIAN

OR THE SHOT THAT SAVED A GENERAL

AND OTHER STORIES

By An Old Scout.



The horse had gone stark mad. After throwing the general, it turned and undertook to trample him to death. Young Wild West, pulling his gun, leaped toward the rearing steed. Crack!

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Young Wild West and the Servians

— OR —

THE SHOT THE SAVED A GENERAL

By AN OLD SCOUT

CHAPTER I.

YOUNG WILD WEST IN AUSTRIA.

Young Wild West had left France for a while and joined the show, which was in camp a few miles from Berlin, Germany.

It had been comparatively easy for the young deadshot to travel to the big German capital, since he had not only won the Kaiser's favor, holding a royal document that would permit him to go and come with the companions who chose to follow him in his continued search of excitement and adventure in the great war zone of Europe, but he had saved the life of Crown Prince Frederick Wilhelm at a battle on the French frontier.

With such an achievement to his credit, it was small wonder that he should have considerable of a "pull" in the German Empire.

After two days at the camp Wild decided that it was out of the question to run the big show for a while, so he began thinking of where he should go next.

"I'll tell you what we'll do, boys," he said, speaking to his two partners, Cheyenne Charlie and Jim Dart, as they were about to retire on the second night after their return to the camp, "we'll just take a ride into Berlin the first thing to-morrow morning and try and learn something about the war. Then we will pick out a place to go to, and we'll strike out just as soon as the girls can get ready."

"That's it, Wild!" the scout exclaimed. "We've seen them fellers they call the Allies fight the Germans, an' I reckon we know that they understand their business putty well. Suppose we go an' see some of the other foreigners fight. Blamed if I wouldn't like to have a look at the Austrians an' Servians, an' the Russians, too. They sartinly have been makin' things ham over that way. If what we've heard is true."

"By jingo!" exclaimed the young deadshot, nodding approvingly. "I reckon you hit it, Charlie. We'll see about it when we go to the city in the morning."

The scout drew himself up proudly, and then after shooting a glance at Jim Dart, he nodded to Wild and said:

"That was jest what I was thinkin', Wild, an' I'm mighty glad that it cetter strikes you right."

"Oh, you are not lacking for ideas, Charlie," was the smiling reply. "If we can only make arrangements to get over into Austria and take our horses with us it will be all right. We'll see about it in the morning."

"The trouble started over that way, from all accounts," Jim Dart observed. "A young Servian assassinated a prince,

or some one belonging to the royal family, and that was the means of getting all Europe into a big war. I have been thinking that it would be a good idea to get over that way myself."

"It's all right, Jim. Say no more about it. Don't forget that we always need sleep when night comes, and we should make the best of it when we are pretty sure that no interference will come. Right here we are as safe from disturbance as we could possibly be."

Early the following morning Young Wild West and his partners left their tent.

It was rather quiet in the big camp, since the sun had not yet showed itself.

The Indians, cowboys, rough riders and other members of the show had no real cause for rising very early.

The fact was they were putting an idle time of it, and were quite willing to receive the reduction in their pay, since there was no business being done with the show.

Of course this was quite a drain upon the treasury, but they had made piles of money while the show was being exhibited, and as the young deadshot and his partners had big incomes from the mines they owned and were interested in the Western part of the United States, they cared little even though they should lose money by making the venture to come to Europe with the big Wild West show.

Since they were there and caught in the war, they were bound to have a good time.

What they called a good time was simply looking up all the excitement and adventure they could, and certainly they were in the proper place for it.

It was not long before the girls appeared.

Right here we may as well mention that the girls consisted of Arietta Murdock, the golden-haired sweetheart of Young Wild West; Anna, the wife of Cheyenne Charlie, and Eloise Gardner, Jim Dart's sweetheart.

It was seldom indeed that the young deadshot and his partners went on a trip without taking them along.

Then, too, there was another who has not yet been mentioned who invariably accompanied them.

This was Hop Wah, the clever Chinese, so called because he was a brilliant sleight-of-hand performer, a born practical joker, and adapted to always doing the right thing at the right time.

But so much has been written of our characters that it is not necessary to describe them any further.

When the young deadshot told the girls at breakfast that he was going to ride over to Berlin that morning and try and make arrangements so they might journey over to that part

of the seat of war where the Austrians were engaged with Serbia and Russia, they seemed somewhat pleased.

Danger was something they little thought of, and this was probably due to the fact that they had passed through so much during their adventurous career in the Wild West of America, that they really felt that it was a second nature for them to participate in scenes where thrills and hair-breadth escapes predominated.

They talked it over briefly, and the girls declared that they would be ready whenever Wild said the word for them to leave.

They had just about finished breakfast when Hop Wah came strolling to the spot where they were sitting on camp stools before a rough board table.

"Velly nice morning, so be," he observed, at the same time bowing in oriental fashion and smiling in his usual bland way.

"Right you are, Hop," the young deadshot answered, and then looking at him steadily for a moment, he added:

"How about a long ride on a railroad train to another part of this big country where the war is going on, Hop?"

"Lat allee light, Misler Wild. Me no likee stay here, so be," and the Chinaman shrugged his shoulders and appeared to be disgusted.

"All right, then. You shall go with us, of course."

"Go on um laiload, eh, Misler Wild?"

"We'll have to, I suppose, for it is doubtful if we could manage to push through on horseback for the distance we intend to cover."

"Where you go, Misler Wild?"

"I don't know just yet, but probably away back into Russia."

"Lat velly gleat country, so be. Maybe you go lilee further and pletty soonee you comee to China."

"I hardly think we'll get anywhere near China, Hop."

"Makee plenty money with um bigee show if you go to China, Misler Wild."

"Shet up, heathen," Cheyenne Charlie exclaimed. "What are you tryin' to give us, anyhow? Why, people in China ain't got enough money to live on, much less put up fifty cents or a dollar to see a Wild West show."

"Lat allee light, Misler Charlie. China velly gleat country, so be. Me likee velly muchee."

"It's a blamed wonder you didn't stay there, then."

Charlie was always ready for an argument with the clever Chinee, and seeing that he was about to get a little excited over it, his wife promptly intervened.

"Keep still," she said, half angrily. "You are always ready to quarrel with Hop. It matters not what the subject is, but you never can agree with him."

"I'd like to know who could agree with him when he says China is a great country, an' that our show would make heaps of money there."

But he said no more to Hop just then, and after the Chinaman had asked a few questions without really getting any further information, he declared that he was more than willing to accompany them.

But the fact was that he would have gladly accompanied them to any part of the world, for he had been so long with the party that he had become a fixture to it.

Half an hour later Young Wild West and his two partners saddled their horses and left the camp, riding straight for the big capital of the German Empire.

As they had always done, they went in their Wild West costumes, and the people who lived on the outskirts of Berlin had become so used to seeing them that they paid no further attention than to look at them with something like admiration as they went by.

After being halted two or three times by officers of the army, our three friends reached the office of the American Embassy.

He had just arrived, and after greeting them pleasantly, he said:

"Well, gentlemen, what is the request this morning?"

"I don't know as we have much of a request to make, Mr. Gerard," the young deadshot answered, smilingly. "But we have made up our minds that we are going to make a trip over into Austria."

"It will be rather dangerous, I think," and the face of the embassy took on a serious expression.

"That is just what we want. You ought to know us well enough for that."

"Yes, I know. Just tell me what I can do for you, and I'll lose no time about it."

"All right. You can help us a little, I suppose. I want to meet the royal secretary as soon as possible."

Ambassador Gerard smiled.

"I rather think," he said, speaking slowly, "that you have as much pull with that individual as I have. Probably a little more."

"I don't know about that. But a letter from you will make it look right, anyhow."

"You shall have it."

Ten minutes later Wild had the necessary letter in his possession, and then after bidding the man who represented their own country in Germany good-morning, they set out for the office of the royal secretary of the Kaiser.

Luckily they found him in, though there were several in advance of them waiting for an audience.

But Wild managed to get the ambassador's letter sent in, and the result was that they were promptly permitted to enter the office.

It was a cordial greeting they received, for certainly the royal secretary had learned how the young deadshot had saved the life of the Crown Prince in the big battle on French soil.

"Any request that can possibly be granted you shall have," he assured them.

When Wild stated that they wanted to find transportation to Austria the secretary smiled and quickly wrote out the necessary paper, not forgetting to put the royal seal upon it.

But when he was informed that they wanted to go by rail and take their horses with them, he thought for a moment and then did some more writing.

"Take this to the officer in charge at the main depot," he said. "I imagine that it will not take you long to make the arrangements you desire."

Wild thanked him, and then after bowing in the royal style, for they believed, as the old saying is, that "when in Rome you must do as the Romans do," they retired; and after making a few purchases in the stores they proceeded direct to the railway station.

They had to wait over an hour before they found the proper official, but once they did it did not take long for them to fix it up so they could leave by a train the following day at noon for Vienna.

When they got there they would have to transfer in order to get to the real fighting zone.

So much of their time had been taken up that they ate a lunch at a restaurant, and did not return to the camp until about the middle of the afternoon.

They found the girls waiting for them eagerly, and as they started to tell them of the success they had met with Hop Wah suddenly appeared, for he was always on hand.

But none of them thought anything of this.

Hop was to accompany them, so he might as well know all about the arrangements that had been made.

However, it never took the girls very long to make themselves ready for a journey, so it was doubly sure that when Wild and his partners mounted their horses to ride into Berlin they would be right on the spot.

They left rather early the next morning, for they knew it would take some time to get the horses into a car and to pack the camping outfit they proposed to take with them.

They arrived at the depot two hours before noon, and found four minor officers of the army waiting to receive them.

Half an hour later the car that had been assigned to them contained their horses and belongings, while they were given seats in a private compartment.

Attached to the train were a number of cars to convey troops into Austria, but this mattered little to our friends, though naturally it would not be a very fast train.

The best part of it all, as some might say, was that it did not cost a dollar for the transportation.

But this was due to the friendship of the Kaiser and the Crown Prince, for it seemed that the magic word had passed all along the line, and the Americans were to be treated as if they were members of the royal family.

Wild would have much liked an audience with the Kaiser while he was in Berlin, but it happened that he had gone to the front.

This was not because he had been promised by the Crown Prince that he would receive an iron cross for the great service he had rendered on the battlefield in France, but he had formed a liking for the emperor who had treated him in such a democratic way.

The ride to Vienna was somewhat tedious, but once they got there the car containing the horses was run upon a siding,

and the young deadshot was informed that it awaited his orders.

After holding a consultation with his partners and the girls, the young deadshot decided that they would remain over night in Vienna, and then set out for Belgrade, in the vicinity of which considerable fighting was being done just then.

"Belgrade is in Servia, Wild," Arietta said, somewhat surprised when he told her what he proposed to do.

"I know it, little girl. Of course I don't mean that we shall land directly into the city. The chances are we will be compelled to stop before we get directly upon the border of Austria-Hungary. But we'll have a chance to see what there is in Belgrade before we get through, and you can bet on it."

The officials seemed somewhat surprised when they learned where the party wished to go.

It was right near the fighting lines, and probably they thought it unwise for them to proceed there.

However, no suggestions were made to the contrary, and in due time they were all riding upon the train which would bring them as far as they could get to the border line of Servia.

Hop Wah had chosen to ride in the car that contained the horses and supplies.

There was a caboose attached to it, where two men who were experienced train hands had charge.

Neither of them could speak English, but Hop got along nicely with them just the same, and before the journey was ended he had taught them how to play draw poker, being so successful as to win all the money they had.

They said nothing about their loss until the car was run upon a siding in a village which was but a few miles from the Servian border.

Then they held a conference unknown to the Chinaman, and the result was that both demanded the money he had won from them.

This happened just as Wild and Charlie were approaching the car to have a look at the horses and see if they were all right.

"The heathen's in trouble with them two fellers, Wild," Cheyenne Charlie said, nodding as if he expected just such a thing would happen. "They're what they call the guards, an' had charge of the car with the horses an' other things in it."

"He's in trouble, all right, but I reckon we'll soon settle it," was the reply.

Then the young deadshot hurried forward, and touching one of the men on the shoulder, said, in as good German as he could command:

"What's the matter. Has the Chinaman done anything wrong?"

Both of them declared that he had cheated them at cards, and had won all their money.

"Ah!" Wild said, when he understood them thoroughly. "Nothing strange in that, eh, Hop?"

"Lat light, Mister Wild. Me velly smartee Chineese. Me give um money back velly muchee quicke."

Then much to the surprise of the two guards, who had so easily become the heathen's victims, their money was passed over to them, while Hop smiled in a kindly way.

Apologies were in order then, and the two did not hesitate to make them.

Jim and the girls came along just about as the matter was amicably settled, and when they learned of what Hop had been up to during the journey from Vienna, they shook their heads and were somewhat indignant.

"If he keeps on acting that way you had better send him back to the camp," Arietta said, looking at Wild and acting very much as if she meant it.

"Lat allie light, Missie Arietta. Me no do something likee lat some more, so be. Me velly goodee Chineese. Me go to Sunday-school in 'Flisco, and me no forgittee."

They were compelled to laugh in spite of themselves, for the Chinaman had such an innocent way about him, which was only skin-deep, however, as they well knew, that it was impossible for them not to smile, even if they could prevent themselves from laughing outright.

In due time the horses were taken from the car and placed in a stable that belonged to an Austrian farmer, which was located about half a mile from the railroad track.

Then our friends soon found accommodations.

But they had barely settled down to think over what they should do next when the startling news reached them that

the Servians were advancing straight to the border ten miles to the left of the city of Belgrade.

"I reckon we have got to get busy, boys, and there must be no delay about it," Wild said to Charlie and Jim. "Now then, we'll do our first scouting in this part of the country. Come on. Let's get the horses ready."

CHAPTER II.

SAVING A SERVIAN AND HIS WIFE.

Young Wild West and his partners found the horses in excellent condition, even though they had suffered considerable of a jolting during the long railway journey.

Naturally they were feeling a little spirited, but all of them were trained so thoroughly that they had no difficulty in managing them.

The girls followed the three to the stable, and while the horses were being saddled ready for a ride toward the scene where the fighting had started, they listened and could hear the rattling of rifle shots.

The farmer who had given them accommodations at his place was much excited.

He was a rather old man and somewhat crippled, but with flashing eyes he declared that he wanted to join the soldiers and force back the enemy.

Arietta turned to him kindly and made him understand that it would be out of the question for him to think of such a thing.

She had already learned that he had three sons in the army, as well as a grandson, and she now assured him that that was quite enough to represent him.

The old fellow became pacified, and when his gray-haired wife came out just as the young deadshot and his partners mounted their horses she smiled approvingly and made Arietta understand that she thought the Americans were going to help the people of her country fight off the invaders.

When she learned that this was not the case, but that they were simply going to be witnesses of the fighting, she seemed surprised.

It was really difficult to make her understand everything they said to her, but finally she gave a nod and then taking her husband by the arm, started back to the house.

The girls waved an adieu to the young deadshot and his partners, and giving them the assurance that they would not run into any unnecessary danger, the three went galloping away, Wild leading on his sorrel stallion Spitfire.

As our friends had been wearing their Wild West costumes ever since they had been in Europe, it was not strange that they should excite a lot of curiosity among the people wherever they went.

They carried their revolvers and hunting-knives, too, and, though they were not supposed to have revolvers loaded with anything more than blank cartridges, they always managed to keep a supply of the real article about them.

Adjoining the farmer's property was a rather long strip of woods that continued on down to a creek or small river which flowed from the marshes directly on the Servian border.

It was in this direction that the fighting was now in progress.

When the three had covered about a mile they came upon the advance guard of a regiment of Austrians that was making a short cut across the farming district.

Wild promptly got his official documents ready, for he knew they would be halted.

Then he turned to his partners and said:

"Boys, we may as well stop right here at this crossroad, and wait till those fellows come up."

It was not long before the captain of the advance guard rode up to them and after showing considerable surprise demanded of them in German to explain their presence there.

The young deadshot coolly answered him rather briefly, and then presented the royal document that had been of so much value to him since he had been in Germany.

The captain read the contents carefully, and then bowed as if in apology.

But at the same time it seemed that he could not understand why it was possible that the three Americans should have so much liberty right in the fighting zone.

However, they were permitted to go their way, so they rode along with the advance guard until they came to the

top of a high hill that overlooked the low land and the marsh in the distance.

It was now eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and was a bright sunshiny day.

On the higher land to the right of the long, low stretch of marsh the lines of the advancing Servian army could be seen stretched.

The burnishings of their equipments flashed in the sun here and there, and though they were fully five miles away, our friends could distinguish the forms of the soldiers quite plainly.

Already the major part of the Servian army had reached the border.

They were being stubbornly resisted by a rather small army, certainly not numbering half as much as the would-be invaders.

But no artillery was being used as well, though when our friends finally came to a halt to the right of the fighting ground and looked back, they saw the heavy guns of the Prussians coming away back on the winding road.

"Wild, we haven't got that field-glass yet," Jim Dart said.

"That's right," was the reply. "I never think of it only when one would come in handy. I'll see if I can't manage to get one from an army officer. Just leave it to me. But we have a pretty good view of what's going on over there. Nothing but smokeless powder is being used, so there is no smoke to interfere with the range of our vision."

While the Austrians were being reinforced rapidly, more of the Servian troops were approaching, and when a big division of artillery suddenly appeared and paused on a hill-top, our friends knew that in a very short time there would be some heavy cannonading.

This proved to be correct, for forty minutes later the big guns of the Servians began belching forth streams of fire and fearful havoc was done among the Austrian troops at the rear.

But it was not long before the fire was returned, and then both sides became a little more cautious.

While they could not get close enough to see everything plainly, Young Wild West and his partners certainly had about as good a view of the battle as any one could possibly think of having.

For two hours they remained there on the little hill, even though several times a misdirected shot whizzed over them or landed within a hundred yards of where they were standing near their horses.

Finally the right wing of the Austrians spread out toward them.

This meant that the fire of the enemy would be drawn that way, so nodding to his partners, the young deadshot said:

"Well, boys, I reckon we'll have to move on a little further. As we are strictly neutral, it wouldn't do for us to be alongside of the soldiers."

"Right you are, Wild," the scout answered, as he turned and mounted his horse.

"Here is a path running away down to the right toward the village," Jim spoke up, as he leaped into the saddle.

"We'll take the path, Jim," and so saying the young deadshot promptly turned his horse to it.

They rode on down the hill and soon found that the path led through a strip of woods rather close to the creek.

Anyhow, they were satisfied with what they had seen, and thought they would return to the farmhouse, since it was long past dinner-time and they were considerably hungry.

Just about half-way to the village they heard shouts in the woods to their left.

Then a scream in the voice of a female came to their ears.

Always chivalric, the young deadshot and his partners were of course ready to lend assistance.

A female in distress was sure to call their attention instantly.

The shouts continued, and then more screams sounded.

Riding swiftly through the woods, Wild and his partners came upon four Austrian soldiers who were handling two persons rather roughly.

One was apparently a poor peasant, while the other was no doubt his wife.

The two were doing nothing more than to beg for mercy; yet the four soldiers kept slapping at them with their swords and even pricking the skin of the man and drawing blood, forcing him to leap about almost continually to avoid the thrusts.

"Hay, there!" the young deadshot called out, in a ringing

voice, as he galloped up and brought Splitfire to a halt. "What are you fellows trying to do? Stop it, you brutes."

Wild spoke in German, for he had gradually come to pretty well master the language.

But it happened that neither of the men could understand very much of what he said, though of course they must have known pretty well that he wanted them to stop the cruelty they were practicing upon the man and woman.

Wild knew right away that they were nothing more than ordinary infantrymen, and even though the man and woman might belong to one of the countries opposing them, they had no right to do anything more than to make them prisoners and treat them properly.

A hoarse laugh sounded from one of the soldiers, who was a burly six-footer, weighing over two hundred pounds, and as if to show the contempt he felt for the intruders, he deliberately pricked the woman upon the arm with his sword, causing the blood to trickle instantly.

This was enough for Young Wild West.

Leaping to the ground with the quickness of a cat, he sprang upon the fellow, and wrenching the sword from his grasp before he knew what was happening, he flung him around and then deliberately struck him a terrific blow between the eyes with his clenched fist.

Back staggered the big Austrian, and if it had not been for a tree that was handy by he surely would have fallen to the ground.

"Whoopee, whoopee! Wow, wow, wow!" shouted Cheyenne Charlie, as he swung himself from the saddle. "We're in for a scrimmage, an' I'm mighty glad of it."

Then, though necessity hardly demanded it, he sprang upon one of the soldiers and knocked him down with a swinging right.

As he was turning to do the same to another, Wild held up his hand and called out sharply:

"Stop, Charlie! Wait till we understand what this all means."

"All right," was the reply. "But I reckon you know pretty well what it means. A big soldier stickin' a sword in a woman's arm an' makin' it bleed. That's enough, I reckon, for me."

"It's enough for me, too. But wait a minute."

The other two soldiers were awe-struck, and neither of them made a move to resent what had happened.

The peasant uttered a cry of joy when he realized that the three newcomers were taking his part.

Rushing to Wild, he fell upon his knees before him and began thanking him in a language that was strange to Wild's ears, for he knew then that he could hardly be an Austrian, even.

"Can't you speak English?" the boy said as he looked at the man.

"Yes, brave sir," was the whispered reply. "But no more now. I must not. I am in disguise. I am a Servian, and the soldiers have found it out."

"Ah! All right, my friend. I don't know as we have any right to interfere with such matters, but since you were being treated so roughly by these fellows, I reckon I'll have to take your part."

The man bowed his thanks, and then rising to his feet, took his wife by the arm and started toward the path.

At this the soldiers broke out into a tempest of angry shouts.

The fellow Wild had struck with his fist ran and picked up his sword and waved it threateningly as the boy barred the way of pursuit.

But the disguised Servian was not going to leave in such a fashion as that.

He turned and came back and began talking excitedly to the soldiers, acting in a way that told our friends plainly that he was protesting his innocence on the charge they had made against him.

The longer Wild let the soldiers keep on raving the more insolent they became.

But he had no notion of punishing them any further just then, so he produced the reliable old document and showed them the royal seal.

This had considerable effect, and they at once became more civil.

But they were not going to let their two prisoners get away from them if they could help it.

One started to seize the disguised Servian, but Wild stopped between them.

"Stay where you are until we investigate," he said, threateningly.

Then Charlie and Jim stepped up, so the four might not leave the spot.

The woman was standing trembling with fear.

"I have an idea," he said, in a low tone of voice, as he looked at the two sharply, "that you want to get over to the protection of the soldiers of your country."

"Yes, yes," was the eager reply from the man.

"Well, take my advice and don't try to do it now. Stay right here on Austrian soil for a while. You have been living here, I suppose."

The man then briefly informed them that he was a very rich man, and had long been a money-lender in the village, gaining a handsome profit thereby.

Finding that a battle had started so near, he had resolved to leave Austrian soil and get into Serbia, but had been intercepted by the four soldiers while on the way.

For some reason the disguise had been penetrated.

Wild thought a moment.

He felt sorry for the two, for he knew that if there were many more such ruffians in the Austrian army they would hardly get across the border line alive.

"I'll tell you what you had better do," he said. "You go to the house we are stopping at and stay there a while. Then when things quiet down probably some one might help you to get over into your own country."

He remembered the name of the farmer, and when he mentioned it the two declared that they knew the family well.

"You go direct there, then," Wild said. "Do as I say. I am an American, and of course I am not taking part in this war. But I have a strong sympathy for you, and I am going to do this much, even if I get into trouble for it."

The Servian quickly accepted the decision the boy made, acting very much as if he felt it compulsory for him to do as advised.

Then taking his wife by the arm, he started on through the woods, and reaching the path, was quickly lost to view.

The four Austrian soldiers of course would have followed them if Charlie and Jim had not prevented them from doing so.

But there was something about the Americans that held them in awe, and even though they expostulated somewhat when Wild returned and looked at them smilingly, it amounted to nothing.

"You fellows take my advice and go on and join your company," the young deadshot said.

While his words were not understood, the motions he made were, and rather reluctantly the four started off through the woods.

"Now then, boys," the young deadshot said, as he turned and mounted Spitfire, "we'll follow along behind the man and woman, and if it is necessary, we'll take them on our horses and deliver them safely at the farmhouse. Come on."

They kept a watch on the Austrians, and finding that they showed no signs of pursuing the Servian and his wife, they rode on down the path and soon overtook the two.

It took but a moment or two to persuade them to ride with them, so Wild took the woman on the horse with him, while Jim permitted the Servian to mount behind him.

Then they turned off in the direction of the quarters they were occupying temporarily, and keeping away from the road, were not long in arriving there.

CHAPTER III.

HOP'S TWO SHOTS.

Young Wild West knew that it was more than likely that trouble would come to him for what he had done in behalf of the Servian and his wife.

But true to his nature, he was not one bit worried about it, trusting to his good luck and ability to take care of himself under any and all conditions to overcome any difficulty that might arise.

The escaped couple were overjoyed when they reached the house of the farmer.

At first they were not recognized by the farmer and his wife on account of their disguise, but it happened that the Servian had once befriended him, so the owner of the place willingly enough permitted them to enter and take refuge there.

Wild explained just what had happened, and though they had their fears, the farmer and his wife seemed to think that the young American was capable of doing things in the right

way, so they let him go ahead with his plans, and the result was that in a short time a secluded part of the house was arranged so the Servian subjects might be hidden in case the soldiers came there to look for them.

The girls were very indignant when they heard the whole story, for they considered it a great outrage for the four burly Austrian soldiers to treat the prisoners, especially the woman, in such a cruel manner.

Arietta took it on herself to question the unfortunate Servian woman, and through the aid of the farmer's wife, who understood considerable of that language, she managed to learn that the couple had lost most of their belongings as well as the house they had occupied, which was quite a pretentious building in the heart of the village.

They had lived there for many years, leading a very quiet life, though the husband had done much in the way of lending money and had accumulated big interest from so doing, thus making him independent for the remainder of his life.

But the war having broken out, things turned against him, and finally he knew it would not be altogether safe to remain there, so he had chosen the manner of escape that has already been described, only to meet with capture by the four Austrian soldiers.

But Young Wild West and his partners had saved the two for the time being, anyhow.

It seemed that the soldiers had not taken the trouble to make a thorough search of the man and woman.

If they had done so they would have found a very large sum of money secreted about each of them, for the clothing they wore, though it was exactly like the garb of the common peasants, contained pockets in which sums of money were concealed.

It was not until after he had eaten a hearty dinner at the farmhouse that Young Wild West learned this.

Then he found that the name of the Servian was Ivan Herres, and that his wife was named Theresa.

The couple had no children whatever, but had distant relatives in Serbia and Russia.

Ivan Herres did not state exactly how he had learned to speak the English language, but there was one thing pretty sure in the mind of our hero, and that was that the man was well educated.

Had he been a poor peasant or some insignificant native of Serbia, the chances are he would not have been bothered by the Austrian soldiers.

But the fact that he was a rich money-lender no doubt made him conspicuous and aroused the enmity of the natives of the country he chose to make his home in.

Herres could not only speak English pretty well, but he was fluent in Austrian, German, Russian, and of course his own language.

This made it possible for all those gathered at the farmhouse to understand each other, for the Servian acted as the interpreter.

Wild and his partners almost forgot about the battle that was raging such a short distance away, so interested were they in conversing with the two escaped prisoners.

It was not until the middle of the afternoon that they again thought of it, for the cannonading was something they had become so used to that they scarcely noticed it.

Hop Wah came to them and reported that a patrol of Austrian cavalymen had halted in the road not far distant from the house, and after watching them for a minute or two, he felt sure that they intended to visit it.

Wild no sooner heard this than he bade Herres and his wife to hide.

Then after cautioning the farmer and his wife not to act strangely about the matter if inquiries were made, he left the building, going out by the back way.

There was an old-fashioned picket fence running across the front of the lot the house stood upon at the roadside.

There once had been a gate, but that had probably fallen apart long ago, and no new one had been made to replace it.

The young deadshot walked leisurely to the gateway, followed by Arietta, who was bound to have a share in the adventure should one occur.

Cheyenne Charlie and Jim Dart went as far as the corner of the house and sat down upon a rustic bench, while Anna and Eloise remained in the house with the farmer and his wife.

Hop Wah waited a while near the kitchen door, and then, lighting a big black cigar, strolled leisurely around to the gateway, paying no attention to any one.

The cavalymen were still at a halt about two hundred feet down the road to the right.

They acted as if they were waiting for some one, and noticing this, Hop walked up to the young deadshot and his sweetheart and said:

"Ley wantee somebody come to tellee whatee do, Misler Wild."

"You have got that about right, Hop," was the reply. "Judging by their equipments, there is no officer there. Probably they are waiting for one to appear."

The words were scarcely out of the boy's mouth when the clatter of hoofs sounded, and then they saw a horseman bearing the insignia of a lieutenant riding toward the halted cavalymen.

"The man they are waiting for is coming, Wild," Arietta said, quietly, as she nodded to her young lover.

"Right you are, little girl. Now then, if those fellows really intend to visit this house in search of the Servian and his wife, we have got to outwit them. If we don't the chances are we may get into a serious trouble. Not that I am afraid that we wouldn't get out of it all right, even if the trouble comes, for I reckon it won't take very long to square things. But I hate to see that man and woman taken prisoners after having seen how they were treated in the woods by the four burly Austrians."

The lieutenant of the patrol brought his horse to a halt and listened eagerly to what the cavalymen had to say.

He turned and looked toward the house almost the moment they began to talk to him.

Naturally he showed surprise at seeing Americans at the front of it, for they certainly looked dashing and picturesque to say the least.

Then again, the Chinaman, who had come out to the roadside, stood there puffing away at his cigar as if he was at perfect ease.

After talking for a couple of minutes the lieutenant rode up near the gate and halted.

He was rather polite, and after making a sort of salute, he said something in his own language, which Wild knew was an inquiry, though just what he could not tell.

"Can't understand that lingo yet, lieutenant," the boy answered, in his cool and easy way.

The officer looked slightly puzzled, and then repeated the question.

"Ich kannicht verstehen," the young deadshot said, speaking in his best German.

At this the Austrian lieutenant's eyes lighted up, and then he asked in German:

"Where is the farmer who owns this house?"

"Inside," Wild retorted, quickly. "But look here, lieutenant, I may as well inform you that my party is stopping here, and that we have permission from Kaiser Wilhelm's private secretary to come and go throughout Austria. Maybe your emperor, Josef, has heard about it. But it matters not, since I reckon the Kaiser is lord of all creation, including Austria."

Somewhat mystified, the officer looked over the royal document that Wild showed him.

"This is our boarding-place just at present," the boy went on, in his cool and easy way as he nodded toward the house. "All of us are neutral in this war, but I assure you that the farmer is red-hot against the Servians."

The lieutenant nodded and then turned and talked for fully five minutes with his men.

Our friends watched them closely, and they could readily understand that, even though they preferred to go into the house, they were quite willing to abide by the decision of their superior.

Finally the lieutenant turned to Wild and smilingly said:

"It seems that one of my men was informed by an infantryman that two spies had come to this house. They were traced here, so the story goes. But of course neither you nor any of your companions are under suspicion, for the spies are Servians."

"Servians, eh?" Wild asked, shaking his head. "I am sure I don't know anything about it, lieutenant."

"Then you don't know just who is in the house?"

"The farmer and his wife were there a little while ago, and as they have no children that I know of, I hardly think there is any one else there, excepting the cat and dog. We just had our dinner a few minutes ago, and there was no one else there at the time."

"Well, I presume it is my duty to make inquiries, even if I don't search the house. The information coming from the infantryman who declared to one of my men that the two spies, a man and his wife, were traced to this house, makes it necessary for me to investigate."

"Very well, lieutenant. Come right on in the house. We'll help you search. If there are any spies under the roof, I am sure we don't want them there."

The young deadshot was well satisfied that Ivan Horro and his wife were not spies, but were being persecuted because of their nationality, so with Arietta walking at his side, he led the way to the front door of the house.

A knock brought the farmer's wife, and she opened the door and stood there trembling.

In spite of what Wild had told her about being indifferent, the poor woman was badly frightened.

But this was no doubt due to the fact that an officer of the army was seeking admittance.

Wild shot a warning glance at her, which no doubt had good effect, for she answered all the questions put to her by the lieutenant, declaring positively that no one was under the roof or had been there during the day save her American guests and her husband and herself.

Wild suggested that they go inside, and the lieutenant followed him, after telling his men to remain where they were until he returned.

Naturally Charlie, Jim and Arietta went in also, for they were all bent upon keeping the two Servians from being discovered.

Hop, on the other hand, chose to remain outside, and as soon as the rest were in the house he walked leisurely to the group of cavalymen, who had dismounted, and said:

"Velly nicee day, so be."

He blew a cloud of smoke from his cigar into the face of the nearest one to him as he made the remark, and then folding his arms across his breast, looked thoughtfully at the sky above.

Some sort of an angry retort was made, but Hop could not understand it, and it would have made little difference if he did, for he was simply trying to have a little fun with the Austrians.

All of the cavalymen showed their displeasure at the actions of the audacious Chinaman, one of them even going so far as to make a threatening movement with the big cavalry revolver he carried.

But this did not alarm Hop in the least.

He nodded, and smiling blandly, said:

"Velly nicee gun, so be. Me gottee pletty goodee gun, too. Me showee you."

Then from under his loose-fitting blouse he suddenly pulled forth the old-fashioned six-shooter that he had so long carried.

It was a rather antiquated weapon, since it had been made away back in the fifties.

Still, it was serviceable, though it was seldom indeed that Hop loaded it with lead.

The six chambers were always loaded with powder, however, and caps were upon the tubes.

Instead of bullets, the heathen generally filled up the chambers with colored fire powder, so that when he fired a shot if it happened to be in the darkness a display of fireworks would be the result.

But just now he had two of the chambers loaded with capsules that contained red ink.

Should he shoot at anything close by, the capsule would burst and would leave a spattered red spot, which at first might be taken for blood.

It was not the first time Hop had done this thing, for on many occasions while in the Wild West of America he had used the juice of berries to deceive certain ones into thinking they were badly wounded after he shot at them.

At the sight of the old-fashioned weapon the cavalymen laughed boisterously, for they possessed the latest that the great German manufacturers had been able to produce.

"Lat allee light," the clever Chinese said, smilingly. "Me no 'fraid. Me shootee velly muchee straight, so be."

Then he looked around as if to find a target to prove the assertion.

It happened that the farmer owned a white cow, and at that very moment it appeared coming down the road, having by some means escaped from the pasture.

Full of mischief and ever ready to accept a challenge, Hop turned quickly, and pointing to the cow, went on to say:

"Me shootee lat cow velly muchee quicke, so be."

He made a threatening move as he said this, which let the cavalymen know what he meant, even though they could not understand one word that came from his lips.

They laughed more than ever, and talked among themselves, no doubt thinking it would be a great joke if the

Chinaman shot the cow, for he would surely get into trouble, as they supposed.

The cow came strolling along, chewing away at her cud and indifferent to her surroundings.

When she was within a dozen feet of where the cavalrymen had halted Hop gave a nod, and then raising his revolver, took a deliberate aim at her side.

He pulled the trigger, and then—
bang!

A loud report sounded, and the cow gave a snort and sailed.

A blood-red spot showed upon her side, and when they saw it the Austrians naturally thought a severe wound had been inflicted by the shot.

But really the cow had experienced nothing more than a sharp sting as the capsule struck her hide and burst.

"Me velly smartee Chinee," declared Hop, as he turned and fired a shot directly before one of the horses.

A streak of red fire shot from the muzzle of the weapon as the report sounded, and though the animal had been under fire before, it was not prepared for such a thing as this, and promptly reared in the air, dislodging its rider and sending him to the ground in a heap.

The rest of the horses were frightened, too, while the cow coolly proceeded on down the road.

It was a good thing that Hop had fired the two shots, for the lieutenant had about made up his mind to make a search of the house when they sounded.

Naturally he turned and ran outside to find out the cause of the shooting.

Our friends followed him, and when they saw a horse jumping about riderless and one of the cavalrymen picking himself up a short distance away, Wild and his companions knew right away that Hop was the cause of it all.

"Whattee mattee, Misler Wild?" the Chinaman said, as he ran to meet the boy, and making it appear that the shots had been fired somewhere else.

The Austrian lieutenant was greatly excited, and hurriedly demanded an explanation from his men.

When he learned about what had happened, or had received their version of it, he was more puzzled than angered.

"That's all right, lieutenant," the young deadshot said, smilingly. "That Chinaman of ours is bound to have a little fun now and then. He simply played a trick, that's all. Sorry that one of your men was thrown from his horse."

The lieutenant took it good-naturedly, even if the rest did not, and he must have given up the idea of searching the house, for mounting his horse, he saluted, and then gave the command for his men to follow him.

"Me velly smartee Chinee, Misler Wild," Hop said, as the horsemen were disappearing in a cloud of dust down the road.

"I reckon you are," was the reply. "That little shooting you did probably saved us from a whole lot of trouble."

CHAPTER IV.

WILD MEETS GENERAL SELIG.

Young Wild West was not sure that another search might not be made for the Servian and his wife, so when he returned to the house after the lieutenant and his men had taken their departure, he immediately advised them to lie low.

"Of course," he said to Herres, "you can remain in the sitting room here with the rest until you find that some one is approaching the house. Then you had better hide."

But the woman was even afraid to do this.

She seemed to think that it would be nothing short of sure death if they were again captured by the Austrian soldiers.

However, as the afternoon drifted on no one stopped at the house, so she became more at ease.

Along toward sunset the heavy cannonading ceased, and then it was not long before only occasional rifle shots could be heard.

"Goin' to quit with the settin' of the sun, I reckon, Wild," Cheyenne Charlie said, as they stood a few yards from the rear of the house, looking in the direction of the battlefield.

While they were looking in that direction, they could of course see nothing, but when a person listens he usually keeps his eyes fixed in the direction the sounds must come from.

"Right you are, Charlie," the young deadshot answered. "It really isn't much of a battle when we consider some that we have witnessed. But I suppose there has been quite a loss on both sides just the same."

"None of the Red Cross crowd seem to be around," Jim spoke up. "I imagine that they are needed about now."

"Oh, most likely the wounded will be taken care of as far as is possible. Anyhow," and Wild shrugged his shoulders, "we can't do much in that direction, since there are so few of us. It is hard, I know, to realize the awful suffering that comes of this fighting business. But it seems that it must be, so the only way to look at it is to decide that what must be will be."

"I would like to go out there and find out how things are," Dart remarked, after a short silence.

"That's just what we will do, Jim," the young deadshot retorted, quickly. "But I thought it better to wait until dark. I want to see the commanding general of the Austrian army in these parts, if possible. I think I may be able to obtain a pass from him, after showing him the papers I have from the Kaiser."

"I sorter thought you was goin' to look out for that right after we got here, Wild," the scout remarked, thoughtfully.

"I intended to, Charlie, but it happened that I couldn't seem to get in touch with any one who would introduce me to one of the generals."

"I reckon you don't need nobody to introduce you, Wild. You have got a way about you that don't call for sich things as that. Introduce yourself."

"That's what I'll have to do, Charlie. Now then, I believe the farmer's wife has the supper ready. I took a look in the kitchen as I passed a window a few minutes ago, and I could see that things were about ready."

The words had scarcely left his mouth when the farmer was seen coming out of the house.

"Supper's ready," he announced.

Though it was not in German he spoke, our friends knew what he said, so they lost no time in entering the house.

The girls had been doing a little sewing during the afternoon, more to pass the time away than for the need of it, and they had just put it away when the young deadshot and his two partners came in.

The room that was used for dining purposes adjoined the one they were in, so they merely had to open a door and pass through, where the table was in readiness for them.

The two fugitives were not there, though plates were on the table for them.

"I reckon I'll go out to the road and if I hear no soldiers approaching from either direction, it will be safe to let them come down and eat with us," Wild said, so he promptly put on his hat again and went outside.

In a few minutes he returned, reporting that the coast was clear, so Arietta went and called the two Servians.

They came down rather timidly, especially the wife, but when they were assured that everything was all right all hands took their places at the table, and then the farmer assisted his wife to serve the meal, which was really a very good one.

They were not disturbed during its progress, and when they had finished the sun had gone down and it was getting dark rapidly.

"Well, little girl," the young deadshot said, nodding to his sweetheart and smiling, "I reckon I am going out with the boys for a little while for a ride."

"Where to, Wild? Not to the battlefield?"

"That's just where we are going, Et, for I want to introduce myself to the general in command. You see, we haven't arranged things just right yet. What I need is a pass to go where I please, and take Charlie and Jim and you girls with me, if necessary."

"You ought to be able to get that, Wild. I am sure if you couldn't get it no one on earth could."

"I'll take the chances on it, anyhow, little girl," and the young deadshot laughed lightly.

Hop, who ate his supper in the kitchen, was standing at the door listening to what was being said, and as Wild and his partners started to leave the house for the purpose of saddling their horses, he stepped before them, and bowing in mock meekness, said:

"Misler Wild, me likee go, too, so be. Me no wantee stay here. No fun. Me likee plenty fun."

"Shet up, you heathen!" Cheyenne Charlie exclaimed, as if he was angry at what the Chinaman said. "What do we want you with us for? You would only git in trouble, an' then we would be in the same fix tryin' to git you out of it."

"Let him go, Charlie," Wild spoke up. "I'm sure he can behave himself if he wants to."

"All right, then. I won't say no more," and the scout shrugged his shoulders and nodded to show that he was always ready to abide by the young deadshot's decision.

Hop was very gleeful when he found that he could accompany them, and he whistled a Chinese ditty as he proceeded to saddle his horse.

In a very short time they were ready, and when they mounted the girls came out and begged them all to be very careful and not to get into any unnecessary danger.

Hostilities had ceased for the time, anyhow, so it was hardly likely that they would run any risk of being shot by a chance bullet.

But Wild had made up his mind to have a talk with the general in command of the army that was resenting the intrusion of the Servians, and once he got it in his head to do a thing it was seldom that he let up until his purpose was accomplished.

The Austrian soldiers were camped some three or four miles from the village, but it struck the young deadshot that it might be advisable to go to the village first.

There he could make inquiries and find out just who he wanted to see.

Another thing, it struck him that being so close by, the general might have his headquarters at a hotel.

"Boys," he said, after they bade the girls adieu and were riding out to the right, "I reckon we'll ride over to the village first."

"A good idea," declared the scout, nodding his head approvingly.

It was but a short distance, and letting their horses go at a gallop, they soon came to the village.

But few lights were to be seen in the house, which showed plainly that the occupants feared that the Servian army would force its way to them and demolish the houses.

There was one pretty decent sort of a hotel which was located not far from the railroad depot.

Wild noticed that there was a light in almost every window of the building, and that the Austrian and German flags were flying in the glare of the lights.

There was also an ensign, which he knew must represent something in particular.

"Boys," he said, as they neared the hotel, "if I was going to make a wager I'd put it down that the general I am looking for is located in that place. Probably that ensign is his."

"A funny-lookin' flag, all right," the scout declared. "Ain't much of anything. Black an' yaller an' some white on it."

"All sorts of colors are used for flags to denote the different divisions of the army, Charlie," Jim explained.

"All right. I s'pose there's more than a hundred different kinds of flags on the face of this here earth, but there's only one that's any good and looks real nice, an' that's the old Star Spangled Banner, an' don't you forget it."

All agreed with him, even to Hop.

A number of cavalymen were patrolling the village streets, and as the four rode up to the hotel they were promptly challenged by an officer in command of one of the patrols.

"Sprechen sie Deutsch?" Wild asked, in his cool and easy way, as the officer held out his sword, meaning for him to stop where he was.

There was an affirmative answer, and then having found out that the man could talk German, the young deadshot went on to say, speaking in that tongue as well as he could:

"I want to see the general commanding the army here. I am Young Wild West, the American who owns the big Wild West show that was caught in the war and is now in camp near Berlin. I have papers here from Kaiser Wilhelm, and they are of much importance."

He spoke in this way to lead the Austrian officer to believe that the papers he had in his possession were important to the Austrians.

But really the importance they had was to himself and companions.

However, it worked nicely, for after hesitating a moment the officer saluted politely and then bade them remain where they were for a few minutes.

A guard of four mounted men stayed right by them, and in about ten minutes the officer came back, his face wreathed in smiles.

"General Selig is in temporary command of the army in this section," the Austrian said. "He will see you."

"How is that, boys?" the young deadshot asked, as he nodded and smiled at his partners.

"Oh, I knowed you would work it all right, Charlie," retorted, in a matter-of-fact way.

The officer waved the guards aside, and then walked along, motioning our friends to follow.

Naturally Hop started to go with them, but he was quickly ordered to halt.

"That's all right, lieutenant," Wild said, for by this time he had satisfied himself that that was the rank of the officer. "He is our servant."

That settled it.

Hop was permitted to go with them.

Right up to the main door of the hotel, which was a big frame structure and probably a very old one, at that, they rode.

Wild did not wait to be told to dismount.

He slipped from the saddle with the ease and grace of a true Westerner, and Charlie and Jim were not long in following his example.

Then Hop, much to the surprise of the officers and soldiers standing about, leaped upright so he was standing erect in the saddle.

"Hip hi, hoolay!" he said, and then he did something that he had learned since he had been with the show.

He turned a complete somersault and landed on his feet upon the ground probably eight feet from his horse.

"There!" exclaimed Cheyenne Charlie, angrily. "That blamed heathen will spoil the whole business yet. See what he's done, Wild."

If the Austrians gathered about were astonished at the actions of the Chinaman, they were also somewhat pleased, for exclamations to that effect came from some of them.

"Stop that, Hop," Wild said, sharply. "No more funny business for the present, anyhow."

"Allee light, Misler Wild. Me no helpee. Me havee do whattee comee in my head some timee," was the reply.

After he had talked with two or three other officers, the lieutenant placed their horses in charge of some of the soldiers and then bade them follow him.

Into the portals of the hotel they went, Wild leading the way and Hop bringing up the rear.

Into a spacious room that no doubt had been used as a dining-room they were conducted.

Two dignified officers resplendent in their uniforms sat at a square table, one at either end.

There was a big arm-chair at the other side of it, and Wild knew right away it must be for the general in command.

But he was not there.

"Sit down, gentlemen," the lieutenant said, motioning them to chairs.

All obeyed.

Of course they had removed their hats upon entering, and Hop, with his pigtail coiled like a snake on the top of his head and garbed in true Oriental fashion, certainly looked somewhat out of place.

The two officers, who were no doubt generals of the army, kept their whole attention directed upon him, and finding that they hardly took their eyes from him, the Chinaman could not resist the temptation to wink at one of them.

This caused a start from the man it was directed at, and he turned and said something in a low tone to the other general, who then stared at the Chinaman harder than ever.

Hop winked twice at him, and he grinned broadly.

It was not until then that Wild knew why the two generals were acting so strangely.

He happened to look just in time to catch Hop winking.

"That will do, Hop," he said.

"Allee light, Misler Wild. Velly nicee soldiers, so be. Plenty gold on um shoulders. Nicee blass buttons, too. Me likee velly muchee."

Anything further in that particular direction was cut short, for at that moment a curtain parted at the further end of the room, and the general in command appeared.

He was a big, stout fellow resplendent in the uniform of the Austrian army, and with what might be called a stately tread he marched up to the table, and then pulling the chair back, took a seat and stared at the visitors.

No one said a word for a moment.

Then the lieutenant who had led them to the general's quarters gave the usual salute to his superior and spoke something in the Austrian tongue.

The general nodded stiffly and motioned him to retire.

It must have been that the young deadshot had been pointed out as the person who wanted to see him, though our friends had not taken any note of such a thing.

When the Austrian general slowly turned and fixed his gaze upon him Wild arose.

"I am very glad to meet you, general," he said, speaking in his own tongue and stepping forward just as if he was about to meet the most common individual in the world.

"You are the American who is called Young Wild West," the general answered, somewhat coldly.

"I reckon that's just who I am. And you are General—" "General Selig," came the quick interruption.

"You certainly look to be the real thing in the way of generals. I am sure," Wild answered, smilingly.

Then he put out his hand, and after hesitating a moment it was taken and a hearty grip was the result.

Wild got right down to business then.

Having found that the man could speak English very well, he related briefly some of the things that had happened in Germany, dwelling particularly upon his meeting with the Kaiser and how he had saved the Crown Prince on the French frontier.

Before he had finished there was a smile upon the face of General Selig.

"I have heard very much about you, my brave American friend," he declared. "You haven't directly stated your purpose in coming here yet, however. But I presume you desire a permit to go and come through the lines of our soldiers. Since you are in sympathy with the Germans, you of course must be with the Austrians, so I will grant you your desire as far as my official capacity will permit."

"Much obliged, general. But don't get it in your head that we are in sympathy with any nation in this conflict. We are strictly neutral. We are Americans, you know. You must have read the proclamation of President Wilson in regard to this matter. All true Americans will stand up for their president. Don't get it in your head for a moment that we expect to help one side or the other. We are caught in the war here, and being of the adventurous sort, we simply want to have permission to go and come when we please. A piece of parchment with your signature and seal upon it is what is needed."

General Selig stared at him a moment in silence.

Then his face lighted up with a smile.

"I admire you for your frankness, Young Wild West," he said, speaking slowly. "I honestly believe that you are really neutral. But it is more because your president wishes his people to be that way. I feel sure that deep down in your heart you are in sympathy with the Kaiser, and with Austria as well."

"Not necessary to say anything further on the subject," Wild answered, thinking it advisable to let it go at that.

Charlie smiled, and then after conversing with his two associates for two or three minutes, he called for pen, ink and paper.

Ten minutes later Wild became the possessor of a document that was bound to prove of the greatest value to him, and after folding it and placing it in the pocket that contained the other papers, he thanked the general and then bowed himself out, followed by his partners and the clever Chinaman.

"Now then, boys, for a ride through the lines of the Austrians," he said, as they turned toward their waiting horses. "I reckon we will find out just what happened in to-day's battle before we go back to the farmhouse."

"Hip hi, hooray!" cried Hop, and then he again astonished the soldiers, this time turning a handspring and landing upon the back of his piebald cayuse.

CHAPTER V.

OUR FRIENDS VISIT THE SERVIAN.

When Charlie was not at all angered at the Chinaman's advice this time, for he had a sort of contempt for the soldiers who were gathered about, since they struck him as being like a lot of penned in sheep, so rigid was the discipline that was enforced.

The same officer who had conducted our friends to the presence of the commanding general now stepped forward, and after saluting respectfully, he waved the guards and other troops aside.

"That's all right, lieutenant," Young Wild West called out, in his usual easy way. "We fixed everything fine. We are going to this place down to the scene of the battle now."

The lieutenant gave a gasp when he heard what the boy said, but did not forget to wave an adieu as the four rode away.

Once out upon the street the young deadshot and his companions rode leisurely toward the outskirts of the village, heading almost straight for the battlefield.

They had not gone very far, however, before the clatter of hoofs sounded behind them, and then they were overtaken by the lieutenant.

"I have just obtained leave to accompany you for an hour or two," he said, as he drew alongside the young deadshot. "The order came direct from General Selig."

"Good! That means that we will have no difficulty in getting through the lines," was the reply.

"But why do you wish to go?"

"Out of curiosity, I suppose. Another thing, we may be able to help some poor wounded fellow. We worked a lot with the Red Cross over on the French frontier, you know."

"A corps of the Red Cross is now on the field, and no doubt will attend to all that is necessary to be done there."

"Which side did they come from, lieutenant?"

"From the Servian side, I believe," was the reply, with a shrug of the shoulders. "Our corps hasn't been fully organized as yet."

"A little bit slow, I reckon," and the young deadshot shook his head.

They were proceeding on, their horses at a walk, but once they got outside of the village Wild spoke gently to Spitfire, and then away he went at a gallop.

Charlie and Jim followed him quickly, and then came Hop, while the lieutenant, who was much surprised at the quickening of the pace, was left behind.

But he had a good horse under him, and he went dashing forward and soon was riding at Wild's side again.

Since he had been in Germany all summer, the young deadshot had been able to almost master the language as far as speaking and understanding it was concerned.

He had not yet tried to read or write it, though he meant to if he found they were to stay there much longer.

Jim, too, had done the same thing, but Charlie had failed to pick up very much of it.

Hop knew nothing whatever about the German, French, or any other language except his own and his pidgin-English.

Sometimes he would remember a phrase, but it was seldom, indeed, that he got it where it belonged when he tried to speak it.

But it mattered little to him.

He had a way of getting along, anyhow, whether he could make those he met understand him or not.

The Austrians were bivouacked along a line that extended for three miles, and those who had not been shot by bullet or shell appeared to be in fine humor.

Here and there was a tent that was used for hospital purposes, for there were army surgeons and assistants there to look after all such.

Soldiers doing guard duty were pacing back and forth, and when the young deadshot and his partners came galloping up the attention of the latter was quickly drawn to them.

A burly Austrian stepped directly before them just as Wild was reining in the sorrel stallion, presenting his bayonet as he did so and giving the command to halt and give the countersign in his own language.

The young deadshot had no countersign, for it had not been given to him.

But if the lieutenant had not been there he would have shown the written order, which was really a passport to any part of the country.

As soon as the guard recognized the officer he presented arms and gave the necessary salute.

Then a few words to him resulted in all five of the riders passing on through the lines and into the camp.

The lieutenant asked them to wait a while, and went riding off, no doubt to tell some of the other officers that the Americans had been given a permit to go and come as they pleased.

When he returned he was followed by a captain and two lieutenants, who had been educated and could speak English very well.

Then Wild, Charlie and Jim had quite a little chat with them, after which they proceeded on, going straight for the front of the battle line.

When they came to the very edge of the long string of infantry and saw the big marsh lying ahead and the hill that ran upward from it where the lights of the fires of the Servians could be seen in long rows, the lieutenant brought

his horse to a halt and showed that he had no intention of going any further.

"What's the trouble?" Wild asked, as he turned and rode back to him.

"You have come all the way through the lines, Young Wild West," was the reply. "I consider that I have accompanied you far enough. Another thing, should you ride on ahead you will get into the mire and perhaps break one of your horses' legs, or meet with a worse disaster."

"All right, Lieutenant. We won't go straight ahead, then. What's the matter with turning to the right. It looks as if there is plenty of hard ground there."

"Oh, yes, plenty of it. But why go there? You may meet with the enemy."

"Lieutenant," and the boy looked at him steadily, "suppose there are a lot of wounded and dying lying out there. I happen to know that the advance lines of your army were forced to draw back to-day. I can tell that from where the lines are now drawn, since I had a pretty good look at the fighting shortly after it began this afternoon. You are easily half a mile back from that point."

"The wounded have all been looked after, I am sure."

Wild turned and looked off to the right.

It was as dark as pitch for a long distance between the lines of the opposing army, though there was a big patch of woods there.

Even though it was moonlight, it did not seem to reach there, the trees making such a shade as to almost completely obscure it.

A strange longing to get into that patch of woods came upon the young deadshot, and he could not resist the temptation.

Turning to the officer, he said:

"All right, Lieutenant, if you are going no further I'll bid you good-night. We may meet again before you retire, but if we don't the chances are I'll see you to-morrow."

Then with a nod to his partners and the clever Chinnee, he rode on, turning to the right and heading straight for the patch of woods.

The officer shook his head and sat in the saddle watching them until they had almost disappeared.

Then he turned and rode back, no doubt a much puzzled Austrian.

It was nothing if not daring for Young Wild West to even contemplate such a move.

But he was looking for excitement, and he knew that not much in that way could be obtained by remaining in the village or among the soldiers.

Charlie and Jim, ever ready to accompany him anywhere, did not even question what he was doing, and of course Hop did not, for he had no more fear of dashing Young Wild West, no matter where he went, than he did of walking into a saloon in times of peace.

A quarter of a mile from where they had left the lieutenant our friends struck the woods.

There was a well-beaten road running through it almost straight to the Servian border line.

They knew very well that the campfires of the Servians extended nearly a mile along the foot of the hill at the other side of the woods.

"Wild," the scout said, when their horses had been brought down to a walk, and they were proceeding along through the dark woods, "this would be just the place for scouts of them other fellows to do a little work."

"That's just what I was thinking of, Charlie. I hope we meet some of them."

"Great gimlets! So do I. But how in thunder are you going to make 'em understand?"

"What's the odds whether we make them understand or not, Charlie? It is only a little adventure we want, anyway."

"That's it. I'm with you, an' you kin bet your life I'll stick, the same as I've always done."

Jim said nothing.

What his thoughts were just then cannot be said.

It might have been that he thought it rather foolhardy in Wild for going there, or probably he was just as eager to meet with an adventure as the young deadshot was himself.

The beginning of the little adventure came rather unexpectedly.

They had not gone more than a hundred yards further down when a crashing in the woods on their left was heard.

Then out came several dark forms, and a low command was heard, which no doubt meant for them to halt.

This they promptly did, lining up directly before the approaching figures.

"Whattée mattee?" Hop exclaimed, and then he quickly lighted a match and held it before his face.

Exclamations of surprise followed this, but the men, who were evidently Servian scouts, pressed forward and completely surrounded them.

There must have been as many as a dozen of them, and they looked rather fierce from what could be seen of them while Hop's match remained burning.

But they did not go at them roughly.

They spoke considerably in their own language. Wild and his companions not being able to understand a word of it, and then the horses were seized and started off along the road through the woods.

"It's all right, boys," Wild said, nodding his head in his cool and easy way. "We are to be conducted through the Servian lines. That will be all right. We'll have a chance to see how they are getting on."

On they went, the dozen Servian scouts proceeding on either side of them, and in a few minutes they emerged from the woods and found themselves in the bright moonlight.

Then a short halt was called, during which their captors looked them over.

"We are Americans," Wild said, as one fellow, who was evidently an officer, came up and scrutinized him closely.

No doubt the fellow understood what he said, for he nodded and then talked in a surprised way to his companions.

It must have been a sort of consultation they were holding, for presently they started forward again, and five minutes later our friends found themselves riding directly along the edge of a camp, where several fires were burning.

Not until they came to a good-sized tent were they permitted to stop, and then they were bidden to dismount, which they understood from the motions that were given.

"All right," Wild said, smilingly, and he quickly swung his right leg over his horse's neck and slipped to the ground.

Charlie, Jim and Hop followed his example, and they quickly drew up in a line, facing the tent.

Officers and common soldiers crowded about them, looking very curious, for it certainly must have appeared strange to them to see the three Americans and the Chinaman brought there.

There was much jabbering, and then an officer of high rank suddenly stepped from the tent and confronted them.

His surprise was as great as any of the rest.

"Can you speak English?" Wild said, nodding to him.

The officer shook his head.

Then Wild asked the same question in German, and received an affirmative reply.

That was enough.

The boy quickly explained that he had made up his mind to get into Servian territory just to satisfy his curiosity, giving him to understand that he had a pass to go anywhere through Germany or Austria, as well as France, and also telling him of the Wild West Show which had been caught in the war.

He rattled all this off, taking fully five minutes to do so, while the officer listened without interrupting him.

When the young deadshot stopped there was a short silence.

Then the officer shook his head, and in German said:

"I can't understand this. I know not what to do. You have been brought here as prisoners, so such you must remain until I report to my superior."

"That's all right. We don't want you to break any of your military rules. We'll stop here a while. But please make the report as soon as possible. I should very much like to be introduced to the commander of your army."

The officer looked at him as if he was surprised to hear such a remark as this, but without any further comment he turned on his heel and walked rapidly away.

"Well, boys, we may as well tie our horses. We have got to stay here for a while, that's certain," Wild said, as he nodded to his companions.

Then he took the bridle-rein and swung it over the head of the sorrel stallion, after which he led him to a neighboring tree and quickly made a hitch to it.

Charlie, Jim and Hop did the same, for there were plenty of trees near, and then they returned and sat down on the ground before a fire which was close to the tent of the officer.

All this time the dozen Servian scouts who had captured them in the woods remained gathered about.

Evidently they felt it their duty to take charge of the prisoners.

But when they saw them sit down and prepare to take things coolly they were actually amazed.

As many as a hundred soldiers and quite a few officers had gathered about them by this time, but our friends were more amused than they were disturbed over it.

Wild tried to talk with some of them, but it seemed that not one of them could understand either English or German.

After a lapse of ten minutes the officer returned, and stepping up to Wild, he shook his head and said:

"You will have to be held as prisoners of war for forty-eight hours."

"Is that so, officer? I reckon that's putting it on us pretty hard. Just because we were curious to come over and visit you, we are going to be held for forty-eight hours, eh? Well, I rather reckon not. Come on, boys. We'll go back to the Austrians. They are a lot more civil than the Servians, I think."

"Misler Wild," Hop said, stepping up to him quickly, "me make biggie firecracker go bang velly muchee quickee, so be. Let we hide away."

"Don't do it yet, Hop. We'll see if a little nerve can't accomplish what we want to do."

Then the boy deliberately walked over to his horse, and unhitching the animal, sprang lightly into the saddle.

This was the signal for his companions to mount, and they did so almost before any one took a step toward them.

"Officer," Wild said, nodding to that individual, who was now thoroughly amazed, "we decline to stay here for forty-eight hours. I reckon we'll go back right now. I bid you good-night."

A frown appeared upon the officer's face instantly, and drawing his sword, he gave a quick command to the soldiers gathered about.

The result was that a rush was made for Young Wild West and his companions.

"You had better let that firecracker go, Hop," the young deadshot called out.

The clever Chinnee was all ready, and in less than ten seconds there was a flash, followed by a loud report, and a cloud of smoke spread over the immediate vicinity.

"Hip hi, hoolay!" Hop shouted, and then the four went dashing down the hill toward the woods on the Austrian side.

Soldiers were upset in this mad dash of Young Wild West's, but the exploding of the firecracker of the clever Chinnee had the effect of amazing them so that before they were able to recover our friends were well through the lines and galloping swiftly for what they considered safe ground.

CHAPTER VI.

SAVED FROM BEING SHOT AT SUNRISE.

It surely was a reckless and daring thing to do, not counting the danger, when Young Wild West made the dash from the Servian camp.

But when it is taken into consideration that the dashing young deadshot was always taking chances, regardless of any danger that might threaten, it can be readily understood why he did it.

As far as Cheyenne Charlie and Jim Dart went, they were exactly like him in this respect, and as a matter of course, Hop Wah, the clever Chinnee, was bound to follow.

The exploding of the big firecracker by the Chinaman naturally gave them a great advantage, so they succeeded in getting beyond the lines, as has already been remarked.

But they were not out of danger yet by any means.

With their horses going at top speed they sped on to the woods, and once under the cover of the darkness to be found there, they felt that they would be safe, unless they were met by more Servian scouts, who might chance to be in the woods.

Such proved to be the case, for they were scarcely a quarter of a mile from the danger spot when the sharp ears of Young Wild West caught the unmistakable sounds of horses approaching along the road.

"Whoa, Spiffire!" he called out, softly, as he reined in the sorrel stallion.

Charlie and Jim were quick to follow his example in coming to a halt, and Hop, who was a few yards behind, naturally did the same.

"Hush and crouch, boys. I can hear the jingle of the cavalry trappings," Wild said, in his cool and easy way. "I reckon we had better leave the road for a while and let them pass this way."

He turned sharply to the left and rode through a patch of thick undergrowth.

"Naturally, the horses made considerable noise in breaking through this, but as soon as they were a few yards from the road, or trail, as it might really be called, they came to a halt and remained perfectly silent.

The cavalymen, for such they undoubtedly were, came along just then, but when our friends heard them come to a halt they expected that the noise they had made must have been heard by them.

"Keep perfectly quiet, boys," the young deadshot advised, in a whisper, as he sat in the saddle holding a tight rein upon the sorrel to prevent him from taking a step.

Low voices could be heard near them, which told plainly that an investigation was to be made.

Some of the riders dismounted, and they could hear them walking about and thrashing in the bushes.

Wild knew it would be a risky thing for them to do to ride on through the woods, since the trees were very close together and the underbrush pretty well tangled for the most part.

However, if it came to the point they would have to do it, for certainly they did not want to be recaptured by Servian soldiers.

Not that they felt that they would be put to death, or anything like that, but to be detained in a camp for forty-eight hours, as the officer had declared they must be, was utterly out of the question.

They waited patiently for fully two minutes, and then when they heard footsteps at the other side of them, they knew that they were being surrounded.

This meant that whoever the men were they had a pretty good line upon them, and must almost know exactly where they were.

Wild grew uneasy in spite of his efforts to make it appear to his partners that there was nothing to worry about.

Suddenly a brilliant light flashed within a few feet of them.

It was nothing more than an electric searchlight, such as can be purchased almost anywhere, but the glare from it showed the four as plainly as if they were in the noonday sun.

A big Servian soldier was holding the flashlight, and the moment he saw Wild and his companions a cry left his lips.

Then there came a crashing in the bushes all around them, and the next thing our friends knew they were surrounded by a dozen or more men, all of them wearing the uniform of the Servian army.

"Boys," Wild said, in his cool and easy way, "I reckon we're in for it for fair now. There is no use in trying to get away through this woods. We will have to let them take us prisoners, I suppose, and trust to luck to get away from them later on. When we get out on the road it will be different. Then there may be a chance to make a break for our liberty."

Neither Jim nor Charlie made a reply, but Hop gave an exclamation of dismay, and then when he found a big revolver pointed squarely at his breast, he threw up his hands.

The soldiers talked excitedly in their own tongue, gathering closer to the four horsemen as they did so.

"It's all right," Wild said, nodding to them and holding out his hands to show that he submitted to being made a prisoner. "You have got us, so don't get excited over it. We just got away from your army, but I suppose luck willed it that we should meet you fellows. Now then, go right ahead. There is no need of waiting and jabbering away like a lot of monkeys."

"Not one word of what he said was understood by the soldiers.

But by his manner they could easily tell that he had surrendered.

Charlie and Jim sat in the saddle holding fast to the bridles, not making a move to pull a gun.

It was very evident that the Servians were a scouting party that had been sent out.

When they found they had made the capture so easily they appeared jubilant, and began taunting their prisoners.

Cheyenne Charlie grew very angry at this, and would have done something that might have made matters all the worse if Wild had not warned him to keep quiet.

The four were disarmed, and then their horses were led through the bushes to the right.

Naturally they all felt that they would be taken back to the very spot they had escaped from.

But when they found that they were being taken just in an opposite direction along the road, they were somewhat surprised.

However, the Servian soldiers had no intention of taking them very close to the Austrian camp.

They proceeded along the road, their horses at a walk, until they came to another that crossed it, going to the south.

"This looks bad, boys," Wild said, without even trying to look at his partners, for it was too dark to see them, anyhow. "But I suppose it will be all the better for us if we are taken before some other officer, who may not know of what happened a little while ago."

"I was thinking that, Wild," Jim answered. "But blamed if I like this piece of business very much."

"Of course not. But you must remember that it is all in the little adventure we have fallen into. Wait until we see how it ends. You can bet your life that we are coming out at the top of the heap."

"If we don't it will be the first time," Charlie spoke up, encouragingly.

"Me no likee lis, Misler Wild," Hop called out. "But me gottee um bigee levolver allee samee. Ley no findee. Maybe ley thlinkee um poor Chinee no havee gun. Me fixee pletty soonee."

"Don't do anything just yet, Hop, for it may be the means of some of us getting shot," Wild advised.

The cavalymen riding close to them did not appear to like them to talk, for they were quickly prodded with the muzzles of the heavy cavalry pistols their captors had in their hands, and the remarks that were addressed to them surely meant for them to keep quiet.

"All right," the young deadshot said, as he pushed aside the revolver one of them was touching him with. "We won't say anything more, my friend."

He had already spoken to them in both English and German, but was well satisfied that they understood neither of the languages.

The road they had turned into ran almost straight for a couple of hundred yards.

Then they swung around sharply to the left, until they found that they were going almost directly toward the Servian line.

The end of the woods was finally reached, and then a long line of campfires could be seen stretching before them.

"Boys," Wild said, in a low tone of voice, without turning his head, "I reckon we're about a mile below the place where we were taken to a little while ago. That means that we may have a good chance of making things right with some officer who is able to understand us."

The scouts who had captured them so neatly became more elated than ever as they neared the lines.

When they were finally halted by a sentry they all talked at once, but did not neglect to keep close to the prisoners.

Having given the countersign and satisfied the sentry that everything was all right, they were permitted to pass through, and five minutes later Young Wild West with his partners and the clever Chinee were forced to dismount before the tent of the acting commander of the army.

It happened to be General Krusheva, who was then in command of that particular division.

He was a tall, pompous individual, but the turban-like cap that adorned his head made him look somewhat ridiculous.

It was bedecked with gold stripes and no doubt was worth considerable money, conforming quite well to the rest of the brilliant uniform.

He stared at the three Americans in silence for a moment, and then slowly turned his gaze upon the Chinaman.

Then the captain of the scouts who had made the capture proceeded to relate how they had caught the four in the woods.

Wild waited until the general had talked for fully five minutes, and then as he turned to look them over again the young deadshot said:

"General, this is all a mistake. We are American citizens, and if you will give me a chance to explain, I will lose no time in doing it."

Much to his satisfaction, the general retorted in very good English:

"Even though you are Americans, it doesn't mean that you are not spies. Ten minutes before you were brought here word reached me of what happened further up the line. You are the same four, so you must be tried by court martial as spies. Step forward and permit yourselves to be searched before you are imprisoned."

Then Wild started in to give a full explanation, but he was not given the opportunity.

Willing hands seized them all, and a thorough search was made of their clothing.

The young deadshot was considerably dismayed when the valuable papers he carried with him were taken from him.

The general and two aides who had come to the spot looked them over, and then considerable excitement prevailed.

"Spies!" came from the general, as he pointed an accusing finger at them. "What care we if you are American citizens, or the citizens of any other country. These papers prove conclusively that you are agents of the Germans, and it means that you shall die at sunrise. Guards, away with them."

The last was said in the Servian language, but it made little or no difference, for the young deadshot and his three companions knew what it meant.

They were quickly seized and dragged roughly away, while their horses were taken in charge by some of the soldiers.

Into a hollow close to the trenches that had been dug during the day they were hurried, and then chains were produced and in a few minutes they were fastened securely to a heavy log, all being kept close together.

Of course there was considerable protesting on the part of all four while this was taking place, especially Cheyenne Charlie, who completely lost his temper.

But it was useless, just the same, so finally they became more calm.

Meanwhile, inside the tent of General Krusheva there was considerable excitement.

Other officers had been called there, and in the glare of an oil lamp they studied the documents that had been taken from Wild.

While there was nothing to them that would even suggest them being spies for the German army, the mere fact that some of the documents bore the royal seal of the Kaiser's secretary was enough to convince them that the four had come through the Servian lines for the purpose of finding out how they were located, and this meant, of course, that they must be spies.

They talked long and earnestly over it, and then after a final examination of the papers, they were placed together in a pile and General Krusheva put them in his coat pocket, probably for the purpose of keeping them until he could place them in the hands of some one higher in army circles than himself.

However, he meant to adhere strictly to military rules, and though he meant to give the prisoners a trial, it would be but a farce.

They would be shot at sunrise, anyway.

The night passed away, the hours going slowly to Young Wild West and his partners and Hop Wah.

Chained to the big log, they were utterly helpless, and though their positions made it rather painful to them, they were forced to undergo it.

There was no use of trying to make the soldiers guarding them let up any.

Several times Cheyenne Charlie became very wrathful, and gave vent to his feelings by calling the guards all the names he could think of.

But he was only wasting breath, as Wild repeatedly told him.

Not a wink of sleep did either of them get, and finally when they saw that day was beginning to break, they felt slightly relieved, even though in a short time they might be drawn up in line to be shot to death as spies.

While the darkness lasted it had been tedious and slow, but now that it once began to grow light, the time passed too quickly for the prisoners.

The guards were relieved just as it was light enough for them to see what was going on about them.

"It looks rather bad, Wild," Jim said, in a low tone of voice, as he turned his head and looked the young deadshot squarely in the face.

"Rather," was the laconic reply. "But don't think for a moment that we are going to be shot."

"I wish I could feel as hopeful as all that, Wild."

"That's all right. Something is bound to turn up in our behalf. You will see."

"Misler Wild," came from Hop, in a shrill whisper, "me gottee hand free, so me makee fireclacker go bang pletty muchee quicke."

"That's all right, Hop. Don't do it. That won't help our case one bit. I am confident that the general will see us before we are tried and convicted. I will do my best to make him understand that this is all a mistake, and that we are not spies."

It proved that General Krusheva was an easily ruffled man, for before the sun showed itself in the east he was ready for business, and he sent for the prisoners to be brought before him so they might be tried by court-martial.

Those who were to act as judge and jurors were summoned quickly, and then it was not long before the chains were removed from the prisoners and they were hustled before the tent.

It happened that a cavalry captain was present at the time, and the moment his eyes fell upon the prisoners he gave a violent start and then began talking hastily to the general.

Wild had never seen the man before to his knowledge, nor had his partners, but they could tell right away that he was talking in their behalf.

The acting commander of the army listened in surprise at first, but gradually he showed that he was being convinced.

Then he permitted the cavalry captain to step over to where the four were lined up.

"I have seen you before," the latter said, a faint smile showing on his face. "I visited your show in the southern part of France some three months ago. I was there at the time. You have, of course, told General Krusheva who and what you are."

"I tried to tell him, captain," Wild answered, after saluting in military fashion. "But he seems to think that we are spies, and will have it no other way."

"You are not spies, I know. But you should never have ventured into this country."

"I know that well enough. But we couldn't help it. We must be doing something, and adventure is our hobby."

"I shall do my best to save you," the captain said. "Anyhow, you will not be put to death this morning."

Then he again turned to the general, and the result was that orders were given to convey the prisoners to the prison in Belgrade.

"Well, boys, this isn't so bad, after all," Young Wild West said, as their own horses were led to them and they were ordered to mount. "Being put in prison in a Servian city is a whole lot better than being shot to death at sunrise."

CHAPTER VII.

THE SHOT THAT SAVED A GENERAL.

One thing about the adventure Young Wild West had gotten himself into through his recklessness and daring was that the gallant sorrel stallion he prized so much had not been taken from him.

To have parted with Spitfire even for a short time would have troubled him a lot, for his affection for the horse was so deep that he almost regarded him as a human being, faithful from the start to the finish always.

It was the same with Charlie and Jim, for they, too, thought a lot of their horses, while Hop Wah, the clever Chinese, hardly could have duplicated the piebald cayuse he always rode, since he had the animal trained as well as anything in the way of horseflesh possibly could be.

By the time the sun arose the four were well on their way toward Belgrade, which lay but six or seven miles to the west of the big battlefield.

Hostilities were resumed shortly after that, and with the booming of the cannon ringing in their ears, the young deadshot and his partners were saved the humiliation of being compelled to ride along with the Chinaman under the guard of a score of Servian cavalymen.

Doubtless none of them thought it was much of a humiliation, however, for they now felt that it would not be very long before they would be liberated and permitted to return to Austrian soil.

Probably none of them was more hopeful than Hop, who after riding along in silence for a mile or two, suddenly broke into a cheerful ditty that might have been composed by some Chinese composer of more or less note.

Possessing a cracked voice, and not being able to sing, anyhow, when the song started it was quite enough to amaze if not almost dismay the soldiers of the guard.

But Hop kept right on singing, using his best Chinese to emphasize the words of the ditty.

Wild and his partners were forced to smile, in spite of their surroundings.

"That beathen ain't feelin' in sich a good humor as he's tryin' to make it look, Wild," the scout observed, as the song went on. "He's jest doin' that to make these fellers think that he don't care a blame what happens to him."

"Which is a mighty good thing for him to do, Charlie," was the reply. "Hop is certainly a wonderful fellow. While his

acting that way will hardly have any bearing upon the ultimate result of this little adventure of ours, it certainly will let the Servian soldiers know that he is about as independent and indifferent as a prisoner can well be."

"Oh, that's all right. Let him sing. But I couldn't help sayin' what I thought about it."

"You don't feel exactly as happy as you look, Charlie," Jim Dart spoke up, with a smile.

"Maybe you don't, either, Jim," was the reply.

"Perhaps not. But the old saying is that if you keep a stiff upper lip you will get through a narrow place a lot easier."

"Putty narrow jest now, ain't it?" and the scout looked about him and shrugged his shoulders.

Then Wild laughed lightly.

Hop brought his song to an abrupt termination, and turning to the lanky Servian who was riding at his side, he said:

"You velly nicee man. Me likee you um whole lot. Maybe you likee havee lilllee cigar."

He was so pleasant in the way he said it that the soldier nodded his head in the affirmative, though of course he did not know what the Chinaman said.

"See here, Hop," Wild, who was right ahead of him, called out sharply. "Don't you give him a cigar that is loaded. While I hardly think he would dare smoke it now, he might do it before we get out of this scrape, and then it probably would make a little further trouble."

"Allee light, Misler Wild," was the reply. "Me no givee um cigar with powdee in, len. Me givee him goodee cigar."

"Don't give him any cigar at all. You are lucky that they didn't take everything you had from you when the search was made."

"No takee velly muchee, Misler Wild. Me gottee evelythling in um pockee, so be. Um big levolver and lilllee pint of tangle-foot, too. Ley no findee. Velly gleat coat me gottee."

"Keep still about it, or the first thing you know some of 'em will understand what you're sayin', an' then you won't have so many things," the scout advised.

Hop kept on in his jolly way, occasionally bursting forth in something like a song, and then rattling off a lot of lingo that made him appear comical, even though it was not understood by his captors.

In this way they continued on, and in due time arrived at the city.

The prison, which had been taken charge of by military forces, was located in about the center of the city.

It was a strong place, well built of masonry, and when they were bought before the huge iron bars after being forced to ride through a sort of alleyway which was rather dark, it occurred to our friends that they might be forced to endure a whole lot of unpleasantness for a while.

But there was no use of trying to say anything to their captors, so after some preliminary business had been gone through, men in charge of the jail took them under their guard, the horses being led away, no doubt to be held until a verdict in regard to the alleged spies had been arrived at by the officials of that portion of the army.

When they were finally placed inside the prison they found several others there, all of them being charged with spying.

These were Austrians, with the exception of one man, who was a German professor, as they were not long in finding out.

The German could talk several languages, among them English, and he was glad enough to find some one he could tell his troubles to.

It did not take the young deadshot and his partners more than five minutes to satisfy themselves that he was not a spy, but that he really had been caught by the enemy while in their territory.

The fact was the German professor had been abroad, and had taken the chance of making a short cut in order to get into Germany, when he was seized in Belgrade and promptly accused of being a spy, and then locked up.

When he informed them that he had a cousin living in the city who was quite a powerful factor in the politics of the municipality, it struck Wild that something might be done in their behalf.

"Won't they permit you to send a message to your cousin, professor?" the boy asked, after they had been talking perhaps half an hour.

"I have tried to induce them to do it, but they will not listen," was the reply.

"That's all right. You leave it to me. Come with me to the barred door, and we'll see what we can do with the guard outside."

Quickly enough the German went with him.

As the two peered between the stout iron bars of the prison door they could see the Servian guard pacing up and down, his musket over his shoulder.

Wild was not quite prepared what to tell the professor to say to him, so he paused a moment and then suddenly turned to Hop as a thought struck him.

"Come here, heathen," he said.

"Whattee mattee, Misler Wild?"

"I believe you said that among the other things you still had in your possession was a flask of whisky."

"Velly goodee tanglefoot, Misler Wild."

"All right. Just hand it over."

"Whattee mattee?" and Hop looked surprised.

"Hand it over, I say."

"Allee light," and out came a pint flask, which was nearly filled with liquor.

"Here you are, Professor," the young deadshot said, passing it to the German. "Now then, see if you can't induce that fellow outside to have a message sent to your cousin. You had better write a note if you have anything to do it with."

"I have been permitted to retain the pad and pencil which I had in my possession when I was captured," was the retort.

"Very well. Write a note and state your case as briefly as possible, at the same time urging your relative to do all he can without delay to liberate you."

"And you, too, my American friends."

"Well, you can put it that way if you like. Don't forget the Chinaman, too, for he is going to furnish the means that will cause the note to be delivered, if it is delivered at all."

"I certainly won't forget him."

Then the professor stepped back and quickly wrote the note. Having done this he stepped to the bars at Wild's suggestion and quickly attracted the attention of the guard.

When the flask of liquor was held up the guard gave a start, and then looking around cautiously, hesitated a moment and stepped over.

"Talk to him, professor," Wild said.

The German did so, and the result was that both the note and flask were accepted.

The guard took a sly nip at the flask, and then secreted the note in his pocket.

After this he kept pacing up and down as before.

But it happened that it was not long before a man came to relieve him, and as he was passing away he looked at the two who were still watching at the bars and nodded to show them that he meant to deliver the note.

A little after an hour later the professor's cousin appeared at the door of the jail in company with two military officials.

It must have been that he had considerable influence in the city, otherwise he could never have accomplished what he did.

In less than ten minutes the German professor was given his liberty.

But the young deadshot and his partners were left with the Chinaman among the rest of the prisoners, not a word being said in their behalf.

"Wild, you was a fool to help that Dutchman out," the scout declared, when the door had closed after the professor was liberated.

"It looks that way," was the reply. "I didn't take him for that sort of a man."

But while they were still talking it over ten minutes later, the door of the jail opened again, and in marched two soldiers, who promptly beckoned to the three Americans and the Chinaman to follow them from the place.

"I reckon we made a little mistake about that professor," Wild said, as they passed out of the gruesome place and proceeded along the passage toward the bright sunlight which could be seen shining through an arched doorway ahead.

"Yes, it does seem that way," was the reply.

Once they got outside they were informed by an officer who could speak German that they were to be paroled until the arrival of General Krusheva, which might happen at any time.

"Much obliged," Wild answered, smilingly. "I suppose you might let us look at our horses. We brought them all the way from the Wild West of America, and naturally want to see that they are properly taken care of."

This was duly translated, and the result was that they were permitted to go in charge of four guards to where the horses had been stabled temporarily.

The animals were all right, and after looking them over our friends came outside, and not having anything else to do,

walked out into the big square that was near the jail and sat down upon a bench.

As they were under parole it mattered little where they went in the city, so long as they did not get out of reach of the guards.

They had seen nothing of the German professor or his cousin since they left the prison ahead of them.

But they knew it was pretty certain that through them their release had been accomplished.

The ultimate result would surely be that they would be given their liberty.

As they were sitting on the bench of the little part, which was entirely devoid of trees at that point, the clatter of hoofs sounded on the hard stone pavements a short distance away.

Turning in that direction, they saw a number of gaily uniformed cavalymen approaching.

"I reckon the general is coming, boys," Wild said, as he arose to his feet. "That looks like him riding in the midst of that gang."

"That's just who it is!" Jim exclaimed. "General Krusheva, as they call him, is coming with his bodyguard."

There was no mistake about it.

It surely was the general, and knowing that he was the one who would probably liberate them after being notified of the influence that was working in their favor, Wild took it upon himself to go and meet him.

He turned toward a big stone building from which the Servian flag was flying rather proudly, and just then there was a commotion in the ranks of the approaching riders.

It seemed as if the general's horse had suddenly gone mad, for it was leaping about somewhat after the fashion of a bucking broncho.

The members of the guard scattered to get out of the way, and seemed dismayed.

No one knew more about a horse than Young Wild West, and turning quickly to the Chinaman, he said:

"Hop, is that gun of yours loaded?"

"No, Misler Wild. But me fixee velly muchee quicke."

"All right, put a couple of bullets in the chambers and hurry up about it. The general's horse has either got the blind staggers, or has gone stark mad. I reckon I'll have to do something to get solid with him. If I can't do any better I'll kill the horse."

Hop understood, and with remarkable quickness he took out the wads that held in the colored fire powder from two of the chambers of his big revolver and slipped in bullets.

The two chambers of the lever that was attached to the old-fashioned weapon forced them into place, and the revolver was in readiness.

Meanwhile the horse was dashing straight across the park, bucking and rearing, while it snorted in fury.

Wild started for the spot after slipping the big revolver in the holster at his side.

Charlie followed him closely, but Jim and Hop remained a little in the rear.

Suddenly the general, who showed that he was an expert rider, became confused and lost control of the animal entirely.

Then there was a mighty leap and a swing of the hind hoofs, and the rider went rolling upon the ground.

Instead of continuing on in his wild rush across the park, the animal turned suddenly and dashed straight at the fallen man.

The horse had gone stark mad.

After throwing the general it turned upon him to trample him to death.

Young Wild West understood the situation and, pulling his gun, he leaped toward the rearing steed.

Crack!

Even though it was not his own revolver, but a weapon of the old-fashioned type, the bullet went true to the mark.

The neck of the steed was broken, and with a snort it lunged over to the left and then went sprawling upon the pavement.

The life of General Krusheva had been saved by the dashing young American deadshot.

CHAPTER VIII.

WILD'S SCHEME TO SAVE THE SERVIAN.

Wild ran quickly to the fallen general, who was making frantic efforts to get upon his feet, but seemed unable to do so. "I reckon everything is all right, general," he said, as he

seized him by the arms and actually lifted his whole weight, so he stood upright. "Something's the matter with that horse. Sorry I had to shoot him."

The officer in command of that division of the Servian army looked at the boy in silence for a moment.

Then he laid a gentle hand upon his shoulder and said:

"I have to thank you for saving my life, my brave American friend."

"That's all right, general. Never mind thanking me. I have been fooling around with horses ever since I was old enough to know what one was, and I knew right away that that seed of yours had gone mad. It happens now and then, you know. Horses are much like human beings in that respect. Probably it was because of the blood rushing to the head. But, anyhow, the animal certainly acted very much as if it wanted to kill you."

"He would have trampled me to death, I am sure, for I was unable to get out of the way."

"Well, it's all right, general. I suppose the horse was a valuable one. But I reckon you'll be able to get another."

There was a twinkle in the young deadshot's eyes as he said this, for of course he knew that the officer would not be long without a horse, and the best that could be found at that.

By this time as many as fifty soldiers and officers had gathered about the spot.

Those who had been guarding our friends did not come very close, but stood as if awaiting orders from the general or one of the other officers.

Hop now stepped up and began brushing the dirt from the general's gaudy uniform.

The pallor slowly left the general's face, and he bowed in appreciation of what the Chinaman was doing.

A cavalry captain now stepped forward rather timidly, and after saluting, offered his horse to Krusheva.

"No," was the reply. "I will walk to headquarters."

Having said this, he took Wild by the arm, and then nodding for Charlie, Jim and Hop to follow, he started away.

"Rather unnerved, I suppose, general," the young deadshot said, in his cool and easy way, as they were walking along. "But it's all right. I know you wouldn't hesitate to dash right into the enemies' lines. But when it comes to being nearly killed by a maddened horse, it's a different thing."

"Yes. You seem to know my exact feelings, my young American friend."

"I reckon I do. I have experienced a whole lot, even though I am nothing but a boy, general. But say, there is something I want to speak to you about."

"Wait until we get to my headquarters."

"All right, I won't say another word."

It was but a short walk to the building over which the Servian flag was flying, and once they got inside four officers saluted and escorted them to the private office of General Krusheva.

"Be seated," the general said, and almost before the words left his lips Hop Wah dropped into a comfortable chair and crossed his legs.

No attention was paid to this, though Wild could not help smiling to himself, for he knew Hop was feeling in a funny sort of humor, and must be itching to play a practical joke upon some one.

He shot a warning glance at him, however, making him understand that he was to behave himself, and then he sat down.

The general now spoke to one of the attendants, who quickly retired, only to return a few minutes later with a surgeon, who proceeded to look over Krusheva.

Beyond a slight abrasion of the skin on his right hand and elbow, he was entirely unhurt, though of course he must have felt a little sore from the bump he received when he landed so heavily upon the pavement.

The surgeon wanted to bandage the hand, but this was refused, and then all save our friends were ordered to leave the room.

"Now then," Krusheva said, looking at Wild closely, at the same time picking up a pen and pushing a sheet of paper before him on the desk, "you will please go ahead and state what you wish to say."

"I will do it briefly, then, general. The fact is we are under parole, as you know. Prisoners, in fact, but permitted to go about the streets of the city accompanied by a guard. Now then, I think you must be thoroughly convinced that we are not spies, so what is the matter with giving us our freedom, so we can go back into Austria?"

"Such a request cannot go unheeded. You have saved my

life, Young Wild West, and therefore I will cast aside all my doubts and grant it. But the papers that were found upon your person. The German documents, I mean, with the royal seal attached."

"Have you read them?" the boy asked, coolly.

"Yes."

"Did you find anything written on those papers that would make you believe we were spies?"

"Well, no," and the general hesitated. "But," he added, looking more sharply at the boy, "the evidence is conclusive. You are a friend of Emperor William."

"That's all right. But that don't mean that I am on his side in this war business."

"No, of course not."

"I will tell you plainly that I am not. I am neutral, and so are my friends. Just because we happened to be caught in Germany when the war broke out and were lucky enough to get on friendly terms with the Kaiser and the Crown Prince don't signify that we should help them in any way. The fact is I am of an adventurous turn of mind, as I believe I told you before, and I can't help courting danger. I got it in my head to cross over to your side of the battlefield, and it seemed that circumstances were against us, and we were unfortunate enough to be made prisoners. But it's all right, general. You just let us go, and, if you please, I'd like to have those papers, for our big Wild West Show being laid up near Berlin means that we will have to remain in Germany some little time before we are permitted to take it away."

"The papers are yours, so you shall have them."

Then, much to the satisfaction of Wild, the documents were handed to him.

As he looked them over and came upon the paper bearing the French seal, his face lighted up suddenly, and spreading it out before the general, he said:

"How about that? Would you take from it that we would assist the French in any way?"

The general looked over the document, and then smiled.

"I see it all now," he said. "Evidently you want to be friendly with all the nations involved in the war. You have gained my friendship, and I will now give you a document to prove it."

"That's just what I wanted to ask you, though I wasn't quite ready to do so."

Without wasting any time, General Krusheva wrote rapidly upon the sheet of paper before him.

Then he pushed a button, and an attendant quickly appeared.

After affixing his name to the document he handed it to the attendant, who retired, and a few minutes later returned with it.

The military seal was stamped upon it, as Wild could see, but when the paper was given to him he was unable to read a word of it.

However, Krusheva quickly translated it to him, and then he was glad to know that the document would permit him and his friends to go and come between the lines anywhere in the region that was dominated over by the general's command.

Wild placed the paper along with the rest, and then after wrapping them carefully, put them in his pocket, where they would be safe for the present, anyway.

The general was now busy writing upon another sheet of paper, so Wild sat down, since they had not yet been dismissed.

In a very few minutes Krusheva looked up, and smilingly said:

"I have issued an edict bearing out what is written upon the paper I just gave you," he said. "That will save you considerable trouble, I presume. Just wait a few minutes before leaving."

Again he pressed a button, and the attendant came in quickly.

A few words in the Servian tongue, and he departed with the paper.

"In half an hour it will be spread all through my command that you are to be permitted to go and come between the lines, Young Wild West," the general said.

"Thank you, general," Wild answered, in his cool and easy way, and then Charlie and Jim also bowed their thanks.

Not to be outdone, Hop suddenly arose from his chair and almost touched the floor with his head, giving a true Oriental bow.

"Me thlankee you velly muchee, Misher General," he said. "Maybe you likee havee goodee cigar."

Wild shot a warning glance at the Chinaman, for he feared he might give Krusheva a cigar that was loaded with powder.

But Hop assured him by a smile that it was all right, and the general, though somewhat surprised, accepted the offering, promptly placing it in his mouth.

Hop struck a match, and the next minute General Krusheva was puffing away, leaning back in his chair in perfect contentment.

Our friends lingered there for about ten minutes after this, during which quite a conversation was kept up.

Then Charlie, who was eager to get outside and join the girls as soon as possible at the farm-house, nudged Wild and whispered:

"Ask him if it's all right for us to go now."

The general overheard what he said, and with a nod of the head, he quickly said:

"You may go whenever you please. You are at liberty."

"All right, general. Thank you very much. Now, boys, we'll go and get our horses and light out for the Austrian side."

Once more they bowed their thanks, and then went to the door, which was promptly opened by a guard.

When they got outside of the building they were somewhat surprised to find their horses there saddled and bridled and ready for them to mount in charge of four soldiers.

The steeds were quickly turned over to them, and they at once mounted them.

"Good-by, you Servians. Probably we will visit you again before long," the young deadshot said, as he started the sorrel at a trot.

Then away they rode, straight through the city, and twenty minutes later they were upon Austrian soil.

Heading toward the village, they went galloping along the broad highway, and as they neared it they heard shots and yells.

"Something is going on, I reckon," Jim Dart said, as he looked ahead, but was unable to see anything because of the trees which nearly met in spreading across the highway.

"A little rumpus, I reckon," Wild answered, in his cool and easy way. "But never mind. We are all right now. The girls will be mighty glad to see us, I'm sure."

As they rode into the main street of the village they saw a mob gathered not far ahead.

The smashing of glass could be heard above the yells of the crowd.

Straight for the scene the four rode, Hop Wah bringing up the rear and showing considerable interest.

When they found that it was a private residence that was being demolished by the mob, Wild promptly undertook to find out what it was being done for.

He was lucky enough to strike an Austrian who could speak German, and then much to his surprise he learned that the building was the property of the Servian they had secreted in the farm-house.

"The rich old money-lender," the Austrian explained. "He has escaped in some way after being made a prisoner. His wife is with him, but neither can be found anywhere. The men are taking satisfaction by destroying his house."

"Bad business, lieutenant," Wild said, shaking his head.

But the officer simply smiled and shrugged his shoulders.

Knowing it would not be well for them to interfere, our friends turned and rode away from the spot, and they were not long in reaching the farm-house.

As they rode up before it the girls came running out, followed by the farmer and his wife.

"Oh, Wild!" Arietta cried, joyously. "We thought we would never see you again. What has kept you away so long?"

"We'll tell you all about it, little girl. But don't be in any hurry. We had quite a time of it, you know. Got captured a couple of times and came near being shot at sunrise this morning. But here we are alive and well. The same old story, you know. We were not born to die young."

They rode around to the stable, and when the farmer insisted on helping Hop take care of their horses, Wild and his partners went into the house with the girls.

Then they proceeded to relate all about their adventure.

When they came to that part of it where they discovered that Ivan Herres' house was being destroyed by the mob, Arietta interrupted Wild by saying:

"Oh, Wild, I am sure you could manage to get the unfortunate money-lender and his wife over into Servia. Did you speak to the general about it?"

"By jingo! I didn't, Et. The fact is I never once thought of it. Probably that was because I was too much interested

in ourselves at the time. Being held prisoners on parole is not exactly to my liking, you know. But I think I can fix it all right. Maybe I might be breaking the laws of neutrality a little, but before the day is over I mean to get Herres and his wife safely into Belgrade."

This pleased Arietta greatly, for she sympathized deeply, especially with the woman.

Wild found that the people were all right, and that no further search for them had been made during their absence.

The young deadshot and his partners had not yet breakfasted.

Probably they might have been given something to eat later on if they had been compelled to remain prisoners in Belgrade.

Naturally they were very hungry, so the girls hurriedly assisted the farmer's wife in getting something good to eat for them.

It was ten o'clock when they sat down to the morning meal, Hop at the table with them.

The clever Chinese ate hungrily, and kept on telling his version of the adventure of the night as he did so.

Finally when the meal was over Wild made a call upon the hiding Servian and his wife.

"Mr. Herres," he said, after he had given them some idea of why they had been away since the night before, "I fear your property in the village will be destroyed."

"Nothing more than I expected," was the reply, while the man shook his head sadly. "We are indeed fortunate if we ever get safely out of Austria."

"That's one reason why I came to talk to you this morning. I am going to get you into Belgrade before the day is over."

"If you can do that you shall be handsomely rewarded, my American friend."

"Never mind about the reward."

"Yes, but you forget that even though I may lose all my property, I am still a very rich man. We have no children, and but a few scattered relatives. I insist that you shall be rewarded."

"All right. Let it go at that, then, Mr. Herres," and the boy laughed lightly.

After talking with them a while he set himself to thinking, and it was not long before he arrived upon a plan of action.

"I am going to see to it that you two are disguised as Austrian soldiers," he said, as he looked sharply at the woman. "You have got to keep your nerve, you know. Now just take it easy, and about three o'clock I will be here to fix you up."

Wild felt that it would be quite possible for him to ride about with his partners in company with two Austrian soldiers, so an hour later he strolled down into the village with Cheyenne Charlie and soon found the captain of the infantry, whom he could talk to without any difficulty.

He concocted a story to the effect that he had lost something right at the outskirts of Belgrade, and asked for two cavalrymen to be placed at his disposal, so he might go back and make a search.

Having an official paper from General Selig, it was not at all difficult for him to get what he wanted.

The infantry captain sought the commanding officer of a division of cavalry that was stationed on the outskirts of the village, and the result was that two men arrived at the farm-house just about noon.

That part of it was all right, but when they came there Young Wild West and Cheyenne Charlie had secured a couple of uniforms, which was an easy thing to do after bribing the owners, who had been wounded in the battle of the day before.

The two Austrian soldiers were quickly turned over to Hop Wah, to whom Wild gave instructions to keep them in the house until night, unless he came back before that time. Hop promised that he would do so.

He had obtained a quantity of liquor, and as he had a pack of cards at his disposal, there really would be no trouble about it.

But it happened that the two men had not been given any instructions any more than that they were to do as Young Wild West told them.

Wild waited until Hop had plied the two men with considerable liquor and started a game of cards with them.

Then he took the two uniforms that had been secured upstairs to the Servian and his wife.

He instructed them to put them on over their other clothing, so they might be discarded at any time, giving them half an hour to make their preparations to leave the farm-house.

Things worked along nicely, and while the two soldiers were having a pleasant time of it with the clever Chinese in another

part of the house, Ivan Herres and his wife slipped out of the house in the disguise that had been furnished them, and mounting the horses belonging to the two men inside, were ready to ride away with the young deadshot and his partners.

"Everything is all right, little girl," the young deadshot said to his sweetheart as they were about to leave. "It won't take us long to do this thing nicely. Now then, take it easy until we return."

Then away the party went, Young Wild West determined to lead the Servians safely into Belgrade.

CHAPTER IX.

THE GRATITUDE OF THE SERVIAN.

Everything that had been taken from them when they were made prisoners by the Servians had been duly returned before they left General Krusheva at Belgrade, so Young Wild West and his partners possessed the revolvers.

They had them loaded, too, for they did not know at what time they might be compelled to use them.

As they rode along close to the soldiers scattered about in the village, Wild was careful to keep very close to the disguised Servian and his wife.

He did not want them to show any signs of fear, lest the deception might be discovered.

It happened that the woman was slightly more than the average of the female stature, and hence she passed off very well for a soldier, for luckily she had taught herself to ride horseback in her younger days.

Once they got beyond the village, where but few would be met with, all hands breathed a little freer.

"Well, Mr. Herres," the young deadshot said, as he nodded to the man he was taking such a risk for, "I reckon it won't be very long now before you will be safely inside the lines of your own countrymen."

"How glad I shall be," Young Wild West," Herres retorted fervently. "While it pains me to leave my property in the hands of the enemy, perhaps never again to see it, I will be very thankful to escape them. I am sure I would be put to death if we were caught, and my dear wife will undoubtedly suffer the same fate."

"You are not going to be caught, I reckon. Fifteen minutes from now we will be beyond the danger line. Just take it easy, and begin to make plans for your future. You say you are a rich man."

"Very rich, Young Wild West."

"All right. Then if I were you I would see to it that I get well over beyond the fighting zone as soon as possible."

"I mean to, Young Wild West."

The woman, not being able to understand all they were talking about, questioned her husband, and he interpreted it for her.

She, too, was as thankful as could be, but the young deadshot merely smiled when she tried to express her feelings.

Naturally, Wild chose to take an out-of-the-way route to get into Belgrade.

He turned about a mile to the right, and soon found it necessary to leave the regular road over which Austrian troops were continually passing one way or the other.

When they were within half a mile of what Wild considered the limit of the danger line, and were riding over a cultivated field, five Austrian cavalymen suddenly appeared from a small patch of woods to the left, riding straight toward them.

"What in thunder does this mean, Wild?" Cheyenne Charlie exclaimed, as he looked somewhat excitedly at the approaching riders.

"I don't know, Charlie," was the reply. "You and Jim go ahead with our friends, and I'll drop back and talk with them if I can manage to do so."

Herres urged his horse forward, at the same time seizing the bridle of the animal his wife was riding.

This must have attracted the attention of the approaching cavalymen, for a shout went up from them and they came forward at a faster pace.

Chevy and Jim cautioned the two, and then all four proceeded at a gallop, while Wild kept back, his horse going a little faster than a walk.

When the young deadshot found that the horsemen were about to ignore him, he put his horse to a gallop and rode up before them, so he might hinder them from reaching the two fugitives and his partners.

One of the men, who was an officer, swung his sword threateningly at the boy.

But Wild did not even wince at this.

"Hold on, my friend," he said, in his cool and easy way. "Don't be in such a hurry. What do you want?"

The answer he received was not understood by him, so he repeated the question in German.

Then it was that the officer gave a start and looked at him curiously.

"I am going up close to the Servian line to look for something that was lost by us this morning," he explained. "The two soldiers are accompanying us under the order of the captain of their company."

"There is something wrong with the two men. They are drunk," came the quick reply.

"No, they are not. I'll vouch for that. You fellows go on your way. Here."

The boy quickly produced a gold coin and showed it to the officer, whose eyes sparkled instantly.

Wild tossed it to him, and after catching it and testing it with his teeth, the fellow turned to his companions and talked in a low tone with them for a minute or two.

They had come to a halt, of course, and the four ahead were rapidly leaving them.

After pocketing the coin, the officer gave a sharp command, and then before Wild fairly realized what they were up to the five cavalymen went galloping after his partners and the two fugitives.

"Suspicious, eh?" the young deadshot muttered, under his breath. "All right. I have started in to deliver the Servian and his wife to the spot, and you fellows can bet your lives I am going to do it, no matter what the cost."

Then he spoke quickly to the sorrel, and away he went after them, quickly overtaking them.

The horsemen laughed mockingly at him, as if they really felt sure that something was wrong and that they must right it as quickly as possible.

But when they found that the sorrel could easily outdistance the horses they were riding, they were somewhat surprised.

Wild kept riding in front of them, and then slackening his pace, so he might hinder their quick progress.

Finally one of the men became very angry, and pulling his cavalry sword, swung it fiercely over the young deadshot's head.

A little lower and he would have been killed or badly injured.

"Hold on there! What are you up to?" Wild demanded, his eyes flashing as he swung around so quickly as to nearly upset both horse and rider. "Don't you try anything like that again, or I'll teach you that it isn't safe to meddle with an American citizen."

He spoke in English, but none of them understood.

However, his manner was quite enough to let them understand how they felt about it.

The officer expostulated in German, but Wild, seeing that they were bent upon overtaking those ahead of him, suddenly pulled his gun.

"Stop right where you are!" he exclaimed, as he dashed ahead and swung his horse around before them.

The order was entirely unexpected, but the weapon turned full upon them was quite enough to make them obey.

The horses were reined in and the five looked at the young deadshot in amazement.

"Officer," Wild said, in German, "I don't understand what you fellows are up to. You have just accepted money from me, and now you seem to be bent upon making trouble for my friends. I told you that I was going to the Servian border to look for something."

"Yes," was the quick reply. "I understood that. But it happens that the two men who were to accompany you belong to our company, and that I know them well. The two riding ahead with your American friends are strangers to me, though I recognize the horses."

"Is that so? All right, my friend. I'll quickly explain that to your satisfaction, I think."

They were all at a halt now, and the boy, looking over his shoulder and noticing that Charlie and Jim were rapidly forging ahead with the two they were protecting, became as cool as ever.

"See here," he went on, "I'll admit that the two men ahead are not the ones who were assigned to go with me. But that's all right. They desired to go and see some friends, and found two others who were willing to take their place for a while."

The officers appeared to half believe this.

"That is rather odd," he ventured, after he had spoken to his companions. "They will be disciplined for doing such a thing as that. But at any rate, I must see them and have an explanation from their own lips. Stand aside, and please put away that revolver. You are liable to make trouble for yourself and companions, even though you are Americans and have permission to go and come in this section of the country."

"So you know something about that, eh? Who told you?"

"I have heard much of you, Young Wild West."

"Oh, you have, eh? All right, then. Come on. We'll catch those ahead, and then you can satisfy yourself and ask as many questions as you like."

The young deadshot knew pretty well that if the horses the Servian and his wife were riding were good for anything they could get to safety before they were overtaken.

After putting away his revolver, he rode off at a canter, for the purpose of keeping the cavalryman at the same pace.

Meantime Charlie and Jim knew what Wild was trying to do, and they did their best to keep the two fugitives going.

They knew just about where they would be safe beyond the Austrian lines, and picking out a place where there were a number of ramshackle buildings at the very outskirts of the city, they turned for it.

A brook was crossed, and they got upon the high ground on the other side just in time to see Wild and the five cavalymen coming fully two hundred yards behind them.

"It's all right, Jim," the scout said, nodding to Dart. "Jest as soon as we git behind one of them buildin's over there Herres an' his wife kin jump off the horses an' take off the soldier clothes. I'll tell him to do it."

He rode up to the Servian and quickly did so, receiving a nod to show that he had understood.

Herres knew pretty well what to do, and keeping close to his wife, he turned slightly and soon reached the cover of the shanties.

Then just as he dismounted two horsemen wearing the uniform of the Servian cavalry came galloping up.

As Wild joined his two partners he found Herres and his wife devoid of the Austrian cavalry costume and standing in their ordinary apparel.

The two Servian cavalymen who had ridden up were looking on in amazement, while Jim was trying to explain to them that it was all right.

Herres as soon as he could calm the fears of his wife quickly made them understand who and what he was.

Then as Wild came up he suddenly pulled from his belt a bag that seemed to be quite heavy.

"Take this, Young Wild West," he said, "and may the fates be again with you. I am a rich man, and can well spare it."

Then Herres waved his hand, and seizing his wife by the arm, passed on into the city.

"Boys," the young deadshot said, as they started toward the brook, "I suppose we are going to have some more trouble with those fellows up there. Probably we will be placed under arrest."

Once over the brook, they soon came upon the waiting cavalymen, who had halted behind a fringe of bushes and trees.

"Look out!" he exclaimed, and then he pointed back excitedly. "We must hurry."

He was clutching the bag that had been given him by the Servian, and though the cavalymen noticed it, they did not say anything about it just then.

But they seemed really to think that the two soldiers who were strangers to them, riding horses they knew belonged to their company, had been made prisoners by the enemy, and as they feared pursuit, they turned their horses and went galloping along with the young deadshot and his two partners.

When they were about a mile from the spot the officer in command began questioning Wild sharply.

"You got what you went after, I see, but two of our men became prisoners for helping you."

"Too bad, officer," was the reply. "Yes, I got what I went after. This is something of value to me."

"Gold?"

"I don't know as that's any of your business. I gave you a piece of gold a little while ago, so you had better keep quiet. Suppose I report you to your superior."

The face of the man paled slightly, and he at once became more civil.

They talked it over for a minute or two as they were riding along, and then finally turned and rode away, leaving our three friends to make their way back at their leisure.

Wild and his partners got back to the farm-house much

sooner than they had expected, and once they arrived they tied their horses outside and followed the girls, who were waiting for them, into the house.

"I have got a little present here, girls," the young deadshot said, as he deposited the heavy bag on the table. "I know that it must contain gold, and quite a lot of it. I didn't want to accept it, but the Servian was so persistent that I couldn't refuse. We'll just see how much there is."

He quickly dumped the contents of the bag on the table and it was found that gold coins to the amount of about six thousand dollars were there.

The eyes of the farmer and his wife bulged out with amazement, for it was doubtful if they had ever seen so much money all in one heap.

Wild quickly counted out some of the coins, and handed it to them.

Glad enough were they to accept the money, and when they started to put it away somewhere for safety, the young deadshot asked the girls how Hop and the two cavalymen were making out.

"I have peeped in at them several times," Arietta answered, smilingly. "I'm sorry to say that Hop has the two men very drunk, and if I am not mistaken he has won about all the money they possessed."

"That's all right, little girl. He shall give them their money back, but I hope they are not too drunk to know what they are doing. We'll go and see, boys."

Charlie and Jim followed him, and when they entered the room where they had left the Chinaman and the two cavalymen they found the game of cards still in progress, though Hop was the only sober one there.

"Everyth'ing allee light, Misler Wild?" the Chinaman asked, as he looked up.

"Yes, Hop, everything is all right. Now then, just give these fellows back the money they have lost, and see to it that they don't have anything more to drink."

Hop did so.

"I reckon one of you had better stay here and keep a watch on the two, so they can't leave right away, boys," Wild said, after thinking a while. "I'll go out and see how it looks outside."

Jim agreed to stay, so Charlie and Hop followed him from the house.

They walked out into the road, and when they suddenly saw a cavalryman riding that way leading two riderless horses, they were not a little surprised.

"By jingo!" Wild exclaimed, turning to his partner smilingly, "the two horses that were used by Ivan Herres and his wife to make their escape! This is just the thing."

As they rode up Wild and Charlie promptly took charge of the horses.

Then the young deadshot handed them each a coin and motioned to them that everything was all right.

They were satisfied, so rode away, much to the relief of our friends.

"Nothing could be better," Wild declared, as the horses were led around to the rear of the house. "Those fellows can take their departure as soon as they like now. They may be censured for getting drunk, but we can't help it."

The two cavalymen were quickly brought from the house and ordered to mount their horses and ride away.

But before they went Wild was generous enough to give each of them a sum aggregating a couple of dollars in American money.

"There!" he said, turning to his partners and the girls. "I reckon that will be about all. We have seen a little fighting in this part of the country, and we have done a good turn for a Servian; yet I hardly think we have broken our neutrality, for we can all rest assured that the two we assisted to get over into their own country were not spies."

Strange to say, nothing was heard of what they had accomplished, and after remaining at the farm-house three days, during which time they got very close to the fighting line on more than one occasion, Young Wild West and his friends packed up and started for another part of the war zone, bent upon seeing all they could and meeting with as many adventures as was possible.

Next week's issue will contain "YOUNG WILD WEST'S NEUTRALITY; OR, ACCUSED BY GERMANS AND ALIENS."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

A profound sensation has been caused by a rumor that when this war ends, no matter which side wins, Gibraltar, the impregnable fortress at the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea, which has been held by the British for two hundred years, is to be restored to Spain under a secret treaty between Germany and England.

The Pittsburgh National League Baseball Club announced recently that it has forty-four players under contract for the 1915 season. The number is comprised of seven catchers, fifteen pitchers, eleven outfielders and eleven infielders, and does not include the veteran, "Hans" Wagner. No fear is felt that Wagner will not sign with the Pirates. The veteran always waits until the team leaves on its training trip before signing.

Twelve years ago Oscar Diceman, now of Hudsonville, Mich., saved a little girl from drowning in a canal in Holland. He was profusely thanked by the child's father, and shortly afterward came to this country and forgot all about the incident. Recently, however, he received a letter from the old country saying that the father had died recently, and in his will provided a bequest of \$9,000 for the man who had saved his daughter's life.

Abel Cartwright, who lives near Peabody, Kan., celebrated his one-hundredth birthday anniversary by driving his own motor car and carrying his relatives and friends about the country. Relatives from Illinois and Kansas were present at his home and neighbors gathered to take part in the celebration. Mr. Cartwright is a native of Vermont. He has been married sixty-six years. The first vote cast by Mr. Cartwright was for Martin Van Buren for President of the United States. He is still in good health and enjoys driving his car.

An aviator who has just returned to Paris from the front tells of the difficulties encountered by the flying men on reconnaissance duty. He said: "We are forced to fly at a height of about one mile and a quarter, which makes observations difficult, as small objects, even with the aid of the strongest glasses, assume unfamiliar shapes and become foreshortened. If we fly under that height, we are greeted by a hail of rifle fire, which is far more effective than the cannon. We fear the rifles more than the bursting shrapnel, as the fire of the regiments, concentrated on a single object, is far more deadly."

Sabulite is the name of a new explosive, invented in Belgium, now in use in Australia and New Zealand and recently introduced at the Anaconda mines in Montana. It is from 35 to 50 per cent. more powerful than dynamite and can be exploded only by a percussion cap. It is a mixture of nitrate of ammonia, trinitrotoluyll and calcium silicide. The last, which is the essential principle, is a recent

product of the electric furnace. This takes the place of the powdered aluminum that is used with nitrate powders and is much cheaper than that, besides being stable under ordinary atmospheric conditions. Sabulite does not explode when burned or when hammered upon an anvil.

Hale Britton, of Richmond Center, Ohio, started down his pasture lane the other night, when his dog struck a coon trail and soon landed the coon up a tree. Britton went to the house for a shotgun and when he returned he could just see the coon high up in the top of the tree. He shot at the animal several times, then decided the shotgun was too short-ranged to reach him. After telling his dog to keep a close watch, Britton went over to Dr. Tinkham's house and the two returned with Tinkham's rifle. From then on until 1 o'clock they took turns firing at the coon. Finally they built a fire and waited until daylight. Then they learned the coon they had been shooting at all night was a crow's nest.

Famishing, crawling on his hands and knees like an animal, and close to madness, Samuel H. Baker, a prominent Denver attorney, real estate and mining broker, arrived at Thompson, Utah, December 3, after having been lost for five days in the Utah desert. He had been without food or water, and his only sustenance came from a small can of milk which he had put in his pocket when he started out. Baker and M. J. Gill, of Denver, had gone to Salt Valley, twenty-two miles southeast of Thompson, to inspect some radium properties. Baker, provided only with a light lunch, hired a horse and set out alone across the desert. Saturday night he reached a sheep camp and turned the horse out to graze. The animal returned to Thompson. Sunday morning, Baker, failing to find his horse, started out on foot in search of the animal. He reached his uranium claims, but, continuing his search for the animal, became hopelessly lost.

Over thirty years ago Thomas Edison, the inventor, said that some day the phonograph would perfect the telephone. His prophecy is partly realized in his latest invention, called the telescribe. The telescribe is a simple little instrument. An ordinary desk telephone is equipped with two transmitters and two receivers. The talker uses one set and the other set is attached to a phonograph record, which takes down every word that is said on the wire. It is easy to see that the new invention can have many uses, bad as well as good. It can perform service in making criminals confess, as it will be possible to use it in much the way that the dictograph has been employed. It will be valuable for business men who desire to have records of their conversations over the wire. There are many cases of this nature in which it will come in handy. The apparatus is so made that it takes down conversations of nearly any length without its operation being heard on the phone.

THE MOUNTAIN QUEEN

— OR —

THE FAIR BANDIT

By "PAWNEE JACK"

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER VIII (continued)

"I ask nothing more," was the answer of the young hunter, "and I will restore her to your arms or die in the attempt. She is far dearer to me than she is to you, and why should I falter? No, Harvey Gorman, you shall have your child again, and I, Harry Payne, will save her from the hands of the bandit queen. Rest easy, for it will not be many days ere she is in your arms again. But she shall be my bride. You must not, you shall not, forget your promise to me!"

CHAPTER IX.

TREACHERY.

Harvey Gorman could well afford to laugh once he realized that Harry Payne, otherwise known as "Handsome Harry," though not a friend of his, would aid him in restoring to him his child. He had not the slightest intention of keeping his word and allowing his daughter to wed him, but so long as he worked for him and aided him in his villainous schemes he could well afford to let him think he was the chosen one.

"He is both brave and fearless," he said to himself, as he pondered over the schemes that had taken possession of him, "and he will be of great help to me in aiding me to secure the release of Lorretta. Silver Spur wants her for his bride," rubbing his hands together as he spoke, "and he must have her, for he has so much gold, so much money, and she could not do better. Let this Handsome Harry, as they call him, expect to win her as his bride, if he wishes. It does not matter to me. It will do very well for him to think so. And if he is keen enough and brave enough to restore her to my arms, then I have nothing more to say. Only this—my daughter, the heiress of Harvey Gorman, shall never wed a penniless adventurer like Harry Payne. I would rather see her dead than his bride, and I hope to heaven I may never live to see the day. I would kill her with my own hands before I would see her the bride of one I despised. And I hate Harry Payne more than any other person in the wide world."

Why did he hate him? Because he was all that was good and noble and true. Because he was far above him in everything. Because he possessed the nobility of character which he had never possessed, and never would.

Harry Payne left the rich man, his heart overflowing

with pride and joy. He saw a chance whereby he could be able to redeem himself in the eyes of the father of the girl he loved—not that he cared any too much for his opinion, but it was Lorretta of whom he was thinking—Lorretta, the girl he loved far better than his own life.

So when he left the presence of the rich ranch owner he organized a band who were to invade the wild mountain abode of Belle Bouton, the bandit queen, and force her to give up her fair prisoner. But those things are easier said than done, and he started for the retreat in the midst of the mountains, not knowing how it would end.

It was a dark, moonless night when he reached the retreat of the bandit queen. The sentinels were all sleeping. Whether it was a natural sleep, or whether it was from the effects of the strong brandy with which their generous queen kept them supplied, it was hard to say. At any rate, the invaders did not find it a hard task to enter the abode of the famous Belle Bouton, and bear away with them the fair Lorretta, who had been her prisoner for some time. It was the first time such a thing had ever happened, and but for the fact that the leader of her band was worn out by his hard day's work such a thing would never have happened.

"Courage!" Harry Payne had whispered to his beloved, when faint and trembling she found herself in his arms. "Do you not know me, sweetheart? Do you not recognize the voice that is speaking to you? Ah, surely you ought. Surely, it ought to be the sweetest music in all the world to you!"

"Harry!" she panted, clinging to him as she spoke. "Oh, Harry, I am so glad to see you, dear; I did not know that you were with me. I did not dream that you were near, and you have come to save me; you will take me away from my lonely prison house. I say lonely, for although I have had a pleasant time here, it is indeed lonely. The bandit queen has not been unkind to me. She has tried in every way to make my stay here agreeable, but it is all in vain. I am with you at last, dearest, and you can never know the joy which fills my heart."

He drew her close to him and kissed her brow.

"Never mind, sweetheart," he said, soothingly. "You are all the world to me, and I am more than pleased to see you. Your father has already promised to give me your hand if I would rescue you from the bandit queen. I have kept my part and saved you from her, and now he must keep his word in return."

She made him no reply, for she realized better than

he did the strength of her father's promises. No one knew better than she did how little he thought of them, how soon he would break them, and yet she had faith in him at the last moment.

"He cannot be so cowardly as to break his promise to you, Harry," she whispered. "For bad as he is, he would not dare do that. We are safe enough on that score. I know he is not a man to be trusted, even though he is my own father, yet he would not dare be so false and heartless as to break his word."

"His word will not count so long as I have you, Lorretta," he answered, in a whisper, "and I will not doubt him until I have a good reason to do so."

He little dreamed how soon he would have good reason to doubt the man whom he had never trusted, and yet he had a faint idea that all was not well; and when he took the beautiful Lorretta by the hand to lead her to the father who pretended to mourn for her, he was slightly suspicious of him.

"If he does prove treacherous in the end, he will prove himself a far greater scoundrel than I ever dreamed he was," he muttered to himself, "and I must be on my guard, even though he be the father of my fair Lorretta. One never knows in these times who is his friend and who is not. I hope, however, for Lorretta's sake, that he is my friend, not my enemy, for I should not wish to harm him in any way because he is my Lorretta's father. But I swear that if he tries to play me false, I will show him no mercy."

A smile of joy curled Harvey Gorman's lips when he once more beheld his daughter's beautiful face, and when she was safe in her own room he turned to the brave youth who had restored her to him.

"Seize him!" he ordered a couple of sturdy fellows who stood near-by. "Seize the beggar and confine him in the cellar! He has served my purpose well; now put him out of my way!"

And in spite of his frantic struggles, brave Harry Payne was overpowered by the ranch owner's tools and dragged away to the cellar, where he was thrust into a dark cell where there was no chance of escape. Thus was his courage and trust rewarded by Harvey Gorman.

CHAPTER X.

IN THE HANDS OF A VILLAIN.

When Star Eyes stabbed Black Wolf, the treacherous Indian chief, she believed the wound was fatal, and she hoped she had killed him. There was no remorse within her heart, and she returned to her father's tent, walking as calmly as if she had only been for a ramble in the forest. She held her graceful head proudly erect, and her dark eyes flashed.

"Star Eyes had been gone a long time," Gray Hawk, a powerful brave, said gravely, meeting her. "Too long. But perhaps she met Black Wolf, and he detained her. If so, it is well."

"Star Eyes did meet Black Wolf," the maiden replied, her brow rising and falling in anger. "She met him and she glared at the brave, handsome pale-face, Border Eagle, who has given his heart to her."

"And has not Star Eyes been forbidden to meet this pale-faced youth, this bold Border Eagle?" the chief asked with a scowl black as midnight. "Did not her father, Gray Hawk, tell her that she must not see him again? Still she disobeys him. Does Star Eyes forget that she is an Indian princess in whose veins flows the blood of her royal Indian mother? Would she wed with one of the race who are her father's enemies?"

"Star Eyes will wed with the one to whom she has given her heart," she answered, haughtily. "She does not forget that she is an Indian princess, and she will wed the man she loves. That one is Border Eagle, the pale-face hero, whose eyes meet the sun's strong rays unflinchingly—whose hand is firm and steady—whose aim is sure! It is he to whom Star Eyes has given her heart; it is to him she will give her hand!"

"She shall never bestow her hand upon the pale-face, for Gray Hawk, her father, has promised her to Black Wolf, the great chief, who wishes her for his wigwam. He has honored her by choosing her from all others, and she shall wed him! Gray Hawk commands Star Eyes to become his bride!" the chief said, sternly.

The maiden drew her slender form erect, while a dangerous light crept into her eyes.

"Star Eyes is an Indian princess; therefore, she obeys no one's commands," she answered, haughtily. "Not even those of Gray Hawk, her father. She loves the brave Border Eagle, her pale-face lover, and she will wed him. She hates Black Wolf, the cruel chief, even though he be one of her own people, and she will never wed him!"

Gray Hawk's eyes flashed, and he took a step forward, seizing Star Eyes by the arms.

Star Eyes' only reply was a haughty toss of the head, slowly and with great dignity. "She must not think of wedding the pale-face—she shall not! What! an Indian princess prove a traitor to her own people? No—a thousand times no! I would rather see her lying before me dead than be so false, so treacherous! She must wed with Black Wolf. Gray Hawk, her father, commands her, and when he says she shall wed with one of her own people she knows what it means; therefore, let her prepare to become the bride of the great chief this very night."

Star Eyes' only reply was a haughty toss of the head. Gray Hawk saw it, and, stepping back, he folded his arms across his breast, looking sternly at the maiden.

"Listen to the words of Gray Hawk, Star Eyes," he said, slowly, "and remember them well. The pale-faces are our enemies; they have always been our enemies, and so they will be until the end of time. We are human as well as they are; we have souls as well as they; and still we are not allowed their privileges. We have no rights; we cannot lift our voices and demand what is rightfully ours, for these men, with pale, white faces and cold, gleaming eyes, rob us of everything, the same as their forefathers robbed our forefathers. They took from them their lands, and drove them back step by step, until only the barren wilderness was left them for a home; they made them believe they were merely slaves; and they are doing it yet with us."

(To be continued)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

TO FLY THE AMERICAN FLAG.

Since the passage of the act of August 18th, eighty-one foreign-built vessels of 285,268 gross tons have been admitted to American registry. Of these, nineteen are passenger steamships, and sixty-one are freight vessels. According to Commissioner Chamberlain, additional ships are being added to the American registry every week. Sixty-eight of the above vessels were formerly under the British flag, eight were German and five were Belgian vessels.

PROPOSED BALTIC AND BLACK SEA CANAL.

The commission appointed by the Russian Duma and Senate four years ago has reported favorably on the proposed Baltic and Black Sea canal scheme. It is proposed to canalize the Dnieper and the Dwina, the former flowing into the Black Sea at Kherson, and the latter into the Gulf of Livonia and the Baltic Sea at Riga. The sources of the two rivers at the divide would be connected by artificial waterways. The length of the canal would be 1,540 miles.

HUNTS RABBIT, FINDS GOLD.

Jess Connell, one of the owners of the Humboldt mine in the Trinity range, Nevada, has perhaps discovered a mining prospect in the Trinity range district.

Connell's find was unusually fortunate, inasmuch as it was made while he was hunting jack-rabbits for his evening meal.

What he supposed to be an outcropping of limestone and granite was in reality gold quartz, and a sample with which he returned is estimated by old-time miners to run about \$5,000 to the ton. The vein approximates six inches in width and crops for 30 feet.

GIRL SOMNAMBULIST CUTS OFF HER CURLS.

The mystery of what became of the pretty flaxen curls of Miss Corda Loft, of Brashear, Mo., who lost them while she slept in her home, has been solved. The curls were found in a suitcase under her bed, and because of a dream which she recalls having that night she is convinced that she cut them off herself while walking in her sleep.

The loss of the young woman's hair, discovered when she arose and found what was left badly bobbed, has furnished one of the principal topics of conversation here since.

"I remember dreaming that I was going to leave Brashear, and that I was packing my grip," she said in recounting her experience for the several hundredth time.

"Look in the suitcase then," suggested one of her practical hearers. And in the suitcase was the missing hair and the scissors which the young lady had wielded on it.

Miss Loft has been a somnambulist for several years and has had a number of queer adventures while walking in her sleep.

HOW "AMERICA" WAS WRITTEN.

In connection with the recent presentation of the original manuscript of "America" to the Harvard College Library by the surviving children of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Francis Smith, author of the hymn, the following account by Dr. Smith of how he came to write it is revived:

"The hymn 'America' was the fruit of examining a number of music books and songs for German public schools, placed in my hands by Lowell Mason, Esq. Falling in with the tune in one of them, now called 'America,' and being pleased with its simple and easy movement, I glanced at the German words and, seeing that they were patriotic, instantly felt the impulse to write a patriotic hymn of my own to the same tune. Seizing a scrap of waste paper, I put upon it, within half an hour, the verses substantially as they stand to-day. I did not propose to write a national hymn. I did not know that I had done so. The whole matter passed out of my mind.

"A few weeks afterward I sent to Mr. Mason some translations and other poems; this must have chanced to be among them. This occurred in February, 1832. To my surprise, I found later that he had incorporated it into a programme for the celebration of July 4, 1832, in Park Street Church, Boston."

VERMONT'S BIG CROP OF CHRISTMAS TREES.

The annual shipment from this State of Christmas trees to the city markets was made recently. The total was over 1,500,000 trees, by far the largest number ever harvested, and for which the Vermont farmers will receive about \$100,000.

One large Indianapolis buyer died the past year, but his widow continued the business successfully.

The trees are consigned in carload lots to commission merchants in the large cities—New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and the larger cities of the West as far as St. Louis.

Each tree is neatly sawed off near the base, trimmed and tied and then bundled, the largest trees going in a bundle by themselves, and other bundles holding from two to twelve trees. The farmers receive from 3 to 15 cents apiece for trees; the ultimate consumer pays all the way from 50 cents to \$10. Each carload contains from 500 to 600 bundles, and averages 1,500 trees to the car.

The fir tree is the standard variety, though balsam trees are in great demand in New York because of their fragrant odor.

The 1910 Legislature passed a law establishing a license fee of 25 cents for each person or firm dealing in Christmas trees, but the Legislature of 1912 repealed it. While many claim that the annual harvesting of so many young trees will soon deforest the State, others deny it, pointing out that the buyers confine their work mostly to back pastures where there is a large second growth of trees and numerous "scrubs." Some farmers this season received as much as \$300 for their product.

DICKERING DICK

—OR—

THE LUCKY BOY TRADER

By DICK ELLISON

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER VI (continued)

"That's it. Whipping don't do any good, my boy. You can take him back to the stable now, and tell Joe Bankhead that you have broken him from kicking."

"Hanged if I do!" said Joe. "If he found it out he would put up the price on him. I'll just try my luck tomorrow in swapping. I know a man who will swap a good horse for him but for his kicking, and another one who would give eighty dollars for a good horse who won't kick."

The next day Dick went out with the horse to a place where country people who rode or drove into town were in the habit of hitching their stock, and he challenged them for a swap.

They laughed at him, and said they knew that horse, and that he would kick things to pieces."

"Say," said Dick, "he wouldn't kick at a hornet, much less a horse fly," and to show them that he meant what he said, he actually passed between the horse's legs, and cut at them with a switch.

"Who broke him from kicking?" a countryman asked.

"Never mind about that. He will never kick again," and to prove it he had to help the countryman hitch him up to his buggy, and they drove him out of town for nearly a mile, and no horse ever behaved better in harness.

His speed was good, much better than the farmer's horse, and he was also a good saddle horse.

The countryman was pleased and offered to make an even swap.

"Get out!" said Dick. "You don't know a good horse when you see one. This horse has twice the speed that yours has, and you can see he is as gentle as a kitten. Your wife can drive him, and if she wants to go fast he can put the dust on anybody in the road."

"How much do you want?" the countryman asked.

"Well, I ought to get twenty-five dollars."

"Well, you won't get it from me."

"All right," said Dick. "You are not the only man in the world who wants a good horse."

"I'll give you ten dollars to boot," said the countryman. "That's all the money I've got with me except a five-dollar bill."

"All right," said Dick. "If you'll put in the other five it is a trade, and you'll have a better horse than you ever had in your life."

They dickered over the five dollars for nearly an hour, and then the swap was made.

Dick rode the countryman's horse down to the livery stable, and asked:

"What do you think of this horse, Mr. Bankhead?"

"Whose horse is it?" the stableman inquired.

"He's mine. I made a swap for it."

"The deuce you did! Who did you swap with?"

"Sam Braselton. He's only seven years old, so Sam says, and as strong as a horse of his size ought to be, and sound from his nose to the end of his tail."

Bankhead looked into the horse's mouth, and agreed that he was seven years old.

Then he mounted him and rode him up and down the street a few times.

"Look here, Dick," he asked, "did you let Sam know how that horse kicked?"

"No; I told him he didn't kick at all."

"Oh, thunder! He'll have you arrested for false pretenses. It is against the law to make such false statements as that. He will tear the first buggy to pieces that he hitches him to."

"No, he won't," said Dick. "I broke him from the kicking, and he won't kick at a hornet. Braselton knew whose horse it was, and told me about his kicking, and he hitched him to his buggy and drove him a mile out of town."

"Well, I'll be hanged!" gasped Bankhead, and Dick smiled and asked what he wanted to be hanged for.

"What sort of a swap did you make?"

"I got fifteen dollars to boot," was the reply. "The bargain was that you would divide whatever I could make in a trade with him. You put him at twenty-five dollars, which you told me was more than you could get for him."

"All right. I will give you twenty dollars more and call it even."

"All right," said Dick, and he took the money. Before going home he went down to the depot and divided the thirty-five dollars with the old circus man, who, of course, was duly grateful.

"Now, Uncle Jack," said Dick, "don't tell anybody about your breaking that horse from kicking, and I'll see if I can't pick up another trade like that."

"All right. I'll keep mum."

That night Dick told his mother of his good luck. He showed her the seventeen dollars and a half that he had, and begged her to let him keep ten dollars of it in order to enable him to make other trades when he saw opportunities to do so.

Her faith in either his good luck or good judgment

became so strong that she agreed to it, and he begged her not to say anything about it to anybody.

But Bankhead, the livery stable man, told the story to others, that Dick Doubleday had broken his horse from kicking, and had made a swap with Sam Braselton, got fifteen dollars to boot, and that he had paid him twenty dollars additional as his share of the profits.

People scouted the idea of young Doubleday breaking in a vicious horse, for nobody in Danbury had ever known him to have anything to do with horses.

They shook their heads and said he got somebody else to do it, and all predicted that Braselton would come to town with a broken buggy for the blacksmith to mend up.

A number of the boys asked Dick how he broke the horse from kicking.

"Why, that's easy!" he laughed; "but I'm not giving away the secret, and it isn't the only secret I have, either. If you'll catch a honey bee and bring him to me, I'll show you how to break him of stinging, and won't charge you anything for the secret, either."

"All right," said Jimmie Raines. "I'll do that if you'll tell me how to hold the bee while bringing him to you."

"That's another secret," laughed Dick.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DEACON AND HIS DOG.

Up to the time of his first horse swap Dick Doubleday had no definite idea as to what his future occupation would be. His luck at trading finally suggested to him that he make that sort of business his occupation.

"Mother," he said, after she had consented to his keeping ten dollars out of the seventeen and a half he had made out of the horse trade, "I'm pretty good at trading, and I guess I'd better keep on at it as long as I can make it pay."

"Why, yes, Dick, for it seems you can't get anything else to do in Danbury; but you must be very careful. You can't afford to lose that ten dollars."

"Of course not. I expect to make it grow instead of losing it. I'm sorry we haven't got a stable on the place here because there is money in horse trading."

"Why, Dick, what in the world do you know about horses?"

"Very little, mother, but Uncle Jack just knows all about them, and he has told me lots of things about how to mend up horses and make them actually feel young again. He says he can take an old, broken-down horse, half-starved, and make him fat in a week or two, and one can get twice as much for him."

"Yes; but it costs money to feed a horse."

"Oh, yes, I told him that, but he said it wouldn't cost as much as I thought it would. He told me, though, never to trade for a horse with swollen joints, or one that was injured in any way; but that half-starved horses, whose limbs were sound, were always a good investment. You know he was for years a trainer of circus horses."

The news of his horse trade spread all through Danbury, and his old Grandfather Morris heard of it.

"I wonder if he is going to turn horse trader?" the old man snorted. "It's the worst business in the world. I've heard it all my life that horse traders have to do more lying than people in any other business. He's a bright boy, and so was his father, but with all that he never got along in the world. I never see the boy at church. His mother used to make him attend Sunday-school, but I never see him there any more."

"Well, I can tell you the reason why," said the old man's wife. "He stays at home and helps his mother of Sundays, which his father used to do. You may say what you please about him, Josiah, but he's good to his mother."

"Oh, yes. His father was good to her, too, but he wasn't able to provide for her."

"Very true; but how many men in this town are doing much better? There aren't ten in a hundred who succeed in doing more than making a living. Dick is a bright boy. He loves his mother, and I'm quite sure he will be able to take care of her. Just think, he isn't over sixteen yet."

"No; and he ought to be in school instead of horse trading and attending cock fights."

The stern old deacon could never get over that little cock-fight, and the trade he made with Mose Wright, the dealer in game chickens, was always a sore with him.

The old lady resented the accusation of his attending cock-fights, and denied that he ever did such a thing.

"It was Mose Wright who set the chickens to fighting. He wanted to find out if the Black Spanish was really a game chicken."

The old deacon kept a splendid yard dog on his place, and on the following Sunday morning, when he started to church, the dog followed him out on the street.

Two wagons were passing through the town, and under one of them was a big yellow cur. Before the deacon was really aware of the fact that his dog had followed him out in the street, the yellow cur and the yard dog were chewing each other for all they were worth. Naturally the deacon and his wife stopped.

"Land sakes! That's our Tip!" exclaimed the old lady.

The deacon stopped and looked on; so did the driver of the wagon.

It was pretty near an even match between the two dogs, but they were tearing each other so that the old man finally made up his mind to take a hand in it himself as peacemaker.

He rushed out into the middle of the street with his cane, and began belaboring the other dog.

The wagon driver sprang out with his whip, and began cutting at the deacon's dog.

In about two minutes the two men were belaboring each other.

Of course other people on their way to church saw it, and were horrified.

The wagon driver used a good deal of profane language. Neither man knew the other, but each one was taking up for his own dog.

(To be continued)

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168 West 23d Street

New York

A fine milch cow belonging to Mrs. John Yoeman, of Franklin, Ind., was killed in an unusual way when she was being led from the pasture to the barn for the night. When Mrs. Yoeman crossed the railroad track a train was heard approaching. Despite all efforts to hurry the cow across she firmly insisted on planting herself in the middle of the track until struck by the train.

A man who said he was Maurice Goldblatt, No. 4833 Prairie avenue, a violin instructor at the Chicago Musical College, telephoned a local paper that he had found a pearl valued at \$150 while eating oysters in a restaurant on Wabash avenue. He said his dinner cost 90 cents, so he made a profit of \$149.10 and got his dinner for nothing.

Enzo Bossi, a member of the Italian Aviation Corps, arrived here recently from Genoa on the liner *Tomaso di Savoia*, with a commission from the Italian government, he said, to purchase in the United States aeroplanes and aircraft motors of high power. "The Italian government has seventeen dirigibles," he said, "two of which are as big as Zeppelins; 250 biplanes, and seventy hydroplanes. Several of the latter have been constructed so that they can launch torpedoes." Mr. Bossi said that he had been working on a big aeroplane for flying long distances over the Mediterranean, which was equipped with a 600-horsepower engine. He will turn it over to the government.

After more than 100 years' continuous service the town pump on the square in Navarre, a village five miles south of Massillon, Ohio, has been removed to make way for an ornamental iron drinking fountain to be supplied by the municipal water system. Patrons of the old well have raised a storm of protest. They declare the village water is unfit to drink, but that the old well gave a supply cool and pure. Rochester Square merchants are planning to establish a rival fountain. The fountain craze started in Navarre recently when farmers who went to market complained they were forced to pump water for their horses and automobile radiators.

Superintendent Cole, of the Hornet and Iron Mountain mines, announces that Bear's Dip cave, newly discovered greatest natural wonder in Shasta County, Cal., is soon to be wired electrically and thrown open to the public. Because of inaccessibility less than half a dozen persons have explored its dark depths, containing the strangest, most highly colored and extremely beautiful copper formations ever seen. There are many crystal pools, and when illuminated the cave will be a fairyland. It is expected to attract visitors from all over the State. Metal stalactites of a hundred colors are being prepared for display at the exposition by M. E. Dittmar. The mine owners believe the cave will become as great an attraction as eruptive Mount Lassen.

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GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

Centre County, Pa., has at least two Dianas, Mary and Zilla Sharer, who killed a deer. The girls dragged it a half-mile to their home, skinned and dressed it. The buck had four prongs and weighed 160 pounds.

Frank Lewis and Isaac Gearhart, while digging for fern roots on an island three miles below Danville, Pa., unearthed a rust-covered iron box. They found in it \$16,000 in Mexican silver, \$30 in gold Spanish doubloons and \$1,000 in smaller coins of ancient mintage.

Ezra Light, who resides with his son, Ellsworth Light, on one of the dairy farms near Hershey, Pa., is a remarkable man for his age. Although seventy years old, he has worked in the harvest field during the past summer and at present husks seventy shocks of corn a day. This is a record that is not excelled by many in this entire community.

Miss Dora Keen, of Philadelphia, who left August 15th for Harriman and College Fiords, Prince William Sound, with a party of three men, to explore the glaciers of the fiords and the mountains behind them, has sent word to Valdez, Alaska, that her expedition has been successful. The members reached the sources of the Harvard glacier at 6,000 feet elevation, sixteen miles from the face of the glacier. A pass from the head of the glacier to the Mat-tanska Valley was not found.

If a one-armed man succeeds in supporting a wife and thirteen children on 1¼ acres of irrigated land, why should a man with a small family and two sturdy arms complain a hard luck? E. R. Davis, a native of Utah, was engaged in mining until he met with an accident and lost his left arm. He bought four acres of land in Mil-ford Valley, Utah, of which but a little over an acre is under an irrigation ditch. From this small portion of irrigated land he says he has supported a family of four-teen in comfort. He raises vegetables, fruits and berries.

Because he does not trust grave-diggers, Jasper Suiter has prepared a sepulcher for himself, his wife, and their son Roscoe in their family plot near their home in Ohio,

across the river from Huntington, W. Va. Suiter is an old riverman, now engaged in farming. Though he is sixty years old, he does not anticipate passing away in the near future, nor does he anticipate the demise of his wife or son, but he wanted to "be prepared." He has dug three graves, just wide enough to fit the coffin of each, and with just enough slope to drain properly. "Oh, it doesn't worry me at all," said Mrs. Suiter. "Jasper wanted to know that our graves were dug proper, and so he did it himself. He said he didn't want anybody digging his burying place, because they'd do it in the quickest way possible, and so he did it, and took his time. I reckon they're done right." Suiter worked on his last resting place in moments he could spare from farming.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

Missionary—If you are about to kill me, let me sing a hymn. Cannibal—No, sir! No music with meals in this place.

Boy—I want to buy some paper. Dealer—What kind of paper? Boy—You'd better give me fly-paper. I want to make a kite.

Silliwon—Do you believe in long engagements? Cyni-cum—Of course. The longer a man is engaged, the less time he has to be married!

"What's a cowboy?" asked Fangle's seven-year-old boy. "I know," replied five-year-old Freddy, before Fangle could answer; "it's a bull."

Little Freddie (after listening to parental quarrel)—Mamma, if a little boy is very, very good, does he have to get married when he is grown up?

Messenger—Who's the swell ye was talking to, Jimmie? Newsboy—Aw! Him an' me's worked together for years. He's the editor of one o' my papers.

Nell—A girl shouldn't marry a man till she knows all about him. Belle—Good gracious! If she knew all about him she wouldn't want to marry him.

"Are you going to see the opening game at the Polo Grounds, Jimmy?" "Naw. What's de use? There ain't a knot-hole anywhere in de whole concrete wall."

Honey Child—Mamma, Miss Prim has been here an hour and the clock's going yet. Fond Mamma—What do you mean, dearie? Why shouldn't it go? Honey Child—But papa said when you told him Miss Prim was coming that she was enough to stop a clock.

A farmer boy and his best girl were seated in a buggy one evening in town, watching the people pass. Near-by was a popcorn vender's stand. Presently the lady re-marked: "My! That popcorn smells good!" "That's right," said the gallant companion. "I'll drive up a little closer so you can smell it better."

MY ADVENTURE WITH SMUGGLERS.

By Col. Ralph Fenton.

The war of the rebellion left the United States with an enormous debt to pay, the interest on which ran up into many millions. To meet the interest, as well as reduce the principal a little every year, required a revenue system that taxed the patriotism of the American people severely. The duties on imports were doubled—in some instances they were trebled—and thus the prices of certain articles were raised to very high figures. For instance, the duty on silk goods was put at seventy-five per cent. Dealers took advantage of that to ask one hundred per cent. more for all kinds of silk goods. The result was that many attempts were made to smuggle silks through without the payment of duty. To smuggle through ten thousand dollars' worth of silk was to make a clear profit of seventy-five hundred dollars. No wonder, then, that men in the silk business were watched by the customs officers.

One day the head of the custom-house in New York City sent me a note requesting me to call on him at his private office, after office hours, that afternoon. Of course I went, wondering what he could want of me. We were well acquainted. I had done some fine detective work for him on a former occasion, for which I was well paid, and received honorable mention in his report to the Secretary of the Treasury at Washington.

"Ah," said the collector, as I entered the private office, "you are very prompt, as usual."

"Promptness is one of my hobbies," I replied.

"Take a seat."

I sat down in a large easy-chair, facing him.

"I've got some work for you."

"Smuggling?" I asked.

"Yes; and I have located it as going on somewhere around the circumference of the United States."

"Have you nothing more definite than that?"

"No. It's a profound mystery to all in this department."

"Are you sure none of your officers are engaged in it?"

"Yes. We have watched all the custom-houses along the coast and along the border of Canada, and still it goes on."

"Then there must be collusion somewhere," I remarked.

"I am quite sure there is not. We have been on the watch for six months."

"What line of goods is it?"

"Silks. Certain parties in this city and Boston have immense quantities of silks on the market, which they are willing to sell at prices that savor of smuggling. Honored dealers reported them to us, and we have exhausted all our ingenuity in trying to find out where they got them. You are the only man who I believe can unearth the mystery. You can have carte blanche for men and money. Take hold and do your best. Don't waste any time in watching custom-houses. The smuggling is not done there."

"Have you no clue?" I asked.

"None whatever, further than the fact that they have the silks on the market for sale."

"Have you watched them?"

"Of course we have."

"Well, I'll see you again in a week or so," said I, rising and shaking hands with him.

"Good luck to you," he replied, as I left the office.

"Here's a hard job," said I to myself. "If I work it I will have a grip on a fortune."

The first thing to do was to disguise myself so completely as to utterly sink my identity. My long experience as a detective had taught me that art to a marked degree. Then, armed to the teeth, I began hanging around the large house that was putting the silks on the market, waiting to see what points I could pick up.

On the third day I made a discovery. A grocer's wagon drove up to the rear of the house and emptied a load of barrels on the sidewalk. I also noticed that, while there were many packages waiting to be carried into the basement of the immense establishment, the barrels were rolled in first.

"What does a silk house receive in barrels?" I asked myself, as I saw them disappear into the basement.

An hour later the same truckman returned with another load of barrels. That decided me to watch the truckman. I followed him, and found that he came from a grocery house on the other side of the city. While waiting and watching there I saw another truck come and deliver a load of the same kind of barrels to the grocer.

"Oh, ho!" thought I, "the grocer and silk man are partners in this thing. I'll follow that truckman and see where he gets the barrels."

The truckman led me to the depot of a certain railroad. There were a lot of other barrels there waiting to be removed to the grocer's place. I saw from marks on the barrels that they came from a grocery house in Portland, Maine.

Satisfied that something was wrong down in Maine, I hastened to prepare myself for a visit to that part of the world.

Two days later I was in Portland, quietly loitering around the grocery house whose name I had seen on the barrels. Inquiry at the Portland custom-house revealed the fact that Dodge & Jump, the grocers, never imported any goods through that port.

"I am on the right track," I muttered to myself, as I left the custom-house. "But where do Dodge & Jump get the silk? That's the question. They deal largely in potatoes, and ship thousands of barrels annually to New York. I could see the potatoes in the barrels. I noticed, however, that the potato barrels were different from the others sent to the New York grocer."

Farmers came in with wagon-loads of potatoes every day, and for a whole week I stood around and watched them come and go. One day I saw a farmer come in with nine barrels. Seven of them contained potatoes; two of them, I was sure, contained something else. Keeping my eye on the two suspicious barrels, I noticed they were immediately separated from the others.

"Now, Mr. Farmer, I'll attend to you," thought I, and immediately I went to a livery stable and hired a good saddle-horse.

Once in the saddle, I defied the farmer to get away.

from me. He left town, crossing the river. So did I. He kept the shore road. So did I. He passed leisurely along, and I kept far enough behind to avoid exciting his suspicions.

At last I saw him turn toward the beach and drive down to an old weather-beaten house that looked as though it might be a fisherman's home. The house was not fifty yards from the water's edge, and just high enough to be above the waves in a storm. To the left of the house was a small inlet in which several boats were riding at anchor.

"Oh, ho, my fine fellow," thought I, "you may be a fisherman, but I don't believe it. I'll ride down and have a talk with you, to see what you look like."

I rode back a mile or so, and then turned again. When I reached the locality I saw a man come forward, as if to meet me before I could reach the house. He was a brawny, muscular-looking man, with a pea-jacket and a pair of great boots on, the whole surmounted by a fisherman's hat. In his mouth he carried a pipe, from which he puffed clouds of smoke.

As I rode up he gave me a stare that plainly asked:

"Well, what do you want here, sir?"

"Good-day, sir," said I. "Do you reside hereabouts?"

"I do," was the reply, as he thrust his left hand in his pocket and pulled away at his pipe.

"I am looking for a place to purchase a summer residence," I said.

"Where do yer want to buy, stranger?"

"Anywhere along the coast here."

"Waal, I dunno as I know any one as wants ter sell, 'thout it's McNaughton, up the coast a bit."

"How far is it from here?"

"A bit of five or six miles, sir."

I looked around at the setting sun. It was just sinking behind the hills.

"Could I hire a man to go with me there to-night?" I asked.

"No."

"Can I stop here, then, for good pay?"

"No. We aren't got room."

"Oh, I can sleep anywhere, as long as I have a roof over my head."

"Couldn't do it, stranger," was the emphatic reply: "ther old woman wouldn't have it."

"Let me talk with your wife, and I——"

"Yer can't stop hyer, stranger. We ain't got room."

He was very emphatic.

"It's a good road to McNaughton's. Yer can't miss it, nohow."

"I shall have to try it, then," I remarked, turning away very reluctantly.

Riding back up the hill I noticed the old fisherman eyeing me very suspiciously. In looking back, I also glanced seaward, and saw a bark standing out, low down in the water.

"Here's the nest of the silk smuggling," said I to myself. I'll go into the woods, and to-night slip down the hill and see what's going on in and about that old house."

Under cover of darkness, and leaving my horse tethered in the woods, I crept down the hill toward the cottage. I saw four stalwart men come out and start for the beach.

I was about to follow, when a blow from behind on the back of my head stretched me senseless on the ground.

When came to I was lying in the bottom of a boat, out at least a mile from shore. I made a movement with my hand, and found that I was bound a helpless prisoner.

"Hello!" exclaimed one of the four men in the boat. "Did yer buy McNaughton's place?"

"I couldn't find it," I replied.

They laughed.

"We'll send yer ter Davy Jones. Maybe you'll find that. Yer can't miss it."

"Where does Jones keep?" I asked, anxious to gain time to think.

"Just a little below hyer," was the reply, at which the others chuckled.

"I say, stranger, yer a New Yorker, eh?" one asked.

"Yes."

"Come out ter see about that 'ere silk, eh?"

"Yes."

"Thought so." Another chuckle among them. "Waal, we're the very chaps. We do the thing fine. Thar's a bark out thar thet's full to ther decks with silk. We git it in o' nights, an' carry it in like taters in barrels. That's how we do it. Now, don't you wish you hadn't come, eh?"

"Yes, I do. You've got me foul. I weaken."

"Don't do thet, mister. Die game. Chuck him over, boys."

Two of them seized me, in spite of my protests, and hurled me head foremost into the sea.

Splash!

Down, down I went, seemingly a hundred feet. I made a desperate twist and freed my hands. A thrill of joy flashed through me. I was a splendid swimmer. Exerting myself, I rose to the surface and found the boat out of sight in the darkness. On the shore I could see the lights in the hut, and commenced swimming for them. In an hour I struck the beach. I crept up the hill to my horse, mounted, and hastened back to Portland as fast as he could carry me, reaching there a little before daylight.

That morning I went to the Collector of the Port and got a dozen men, armed and mounted. Then a revenue cutter was placed at my service. I led the men by land, while the cutter went around to intercept the bark.

We descended on the hut on the beach like a thunderbolt. The men were so surprised they did not fire a shot. The fact that I was alive and on top completely unnerved them. They surrendered without a blow. We found an immense quantity of silk in barrels ready to be carted to town as potatoes. The cutter captured the bark and the whole cargo was confiscated. My share of the haul gave me money enough to retire from business, if I so desired. But I shall never forget the adventure and my close call.

Smith and Jones were discussing the question of who should be head of the house—the man or the woman. "I am the breadwinner. Why shouldn't I be?" "Well," replied Smith, "before my wife and I were married we made an agreement that I should make the ruling in all major things, my wife in all the minor." "How has it worked?" Smith smiled. "So far," he replied, "no major matters have come up."

NEWS OF THE DAY

What are believed from markings and form to be relics more than 100 years old of the days when the Hudson Bay trapper traversed the Oregon forests are two large traps recently uncovered on the Upper McKenzie River by workmen on the Government road crew. The traps, which are huge affairs, hand-forged and of odd design, were found by Walter Boon, a resident at McKenzie Bridge. He uncovered the traps three feet underground, while building a new piece of road at the foot of Deadhorse grade, just above Strawberry flats, eighty miles east of Eugene, Ore.

Many years ago, when David Hammond, of Wilmot, S. Dak., now known as Uncle Dave, was in the prime of life, he met and loved a young girl just budding into womanhood. Something estranged them. The young woman married another. Recently Uncle Dave, long a settler of Roberts County, left on a trip to the East, the object of which he refused to disclose. He returned home recently accompanied by a bride, his sweetheart of almost a half century ago. She was Mrs. Barberg Burke of Illinois. The bridegroom is eighty-four years old; the bride, sixty-four.

A curious, strange specimen of lizard or scorpion was captured by Walter T. Todd, near the trolley station of the Chambersburg, Greencastle and Waynesboro Street Railway Company at Highfield. The reptile, or what not, was about eight inches in length and the color of brick dust. It was found lying on the ground only a few feet from the station and, on account of the rain and cool weather, was unable to use its locomotive powers very actively and was easily captured. The reptile had an elongated body without scales, four short legs and short tail, and its body was almost as tough as rubber. Where it came from no one seems to know.

A twelve-pound sweet potato raised by T. O. Smith on his patch, in Forsyth, Ga., caused Z. M. Maynard, a local warehouseman, to "crawfish" out of an agreement that he had made. Listening to Mr. Smith's bragging about the size of some of his potatoes, Mr. Maynard stated that he could eat "at one sitting" the biggest potato that Smith could raise. When Smith hurried home and returned with a tuber that tipped the beam at twelve pounds and resembled a prize pumpkin rather than a sweet potato, Mr. Maynard begged to be relieved from his agreement. The potato, which is a specimen of unusual size, has been on display at one of the local banks.

The oldest hotel in New York City is the half-century-old ship *Jacob A. Stander*, moored at the foot of West Twenty-third street. The five-deck vessel is the home of seventy-five girls and young men, most of whom are orphans. The *Stander* has its own electric-light plant, and, as a hotel advertisement, "all modern conveniences." It is owned by the Atlantic Deep Sea Hotel Company, a philan-

thropic corporation. The guests are charged a nominal sum for room and board. In the summer it goes on sails at night, returning in time for its passengers to go to work in the morning. Last October the boat sprung a leak and sunk when a supply of coal was being taken on for the winter, but the water was pumped out and the hotel again floated.

The new school promised McCarthy, Alaska, by Delegate Wickersham on his last visit has brought up another problem more puzzling to solve. It is the question of a teacher. One faction wants a teacher young and pretty, while the other faction wants an equally efficient but homely teacher. Old-timers pointing to the example of other camps declare that a young and pretty teacher will not be able to stand out the first month, but will succumb to the many offers of marriage which it is confidently declared will come from the susceptible sourdoughs and lonely miners of the creeks. The parents of the children to be educated want a plain if not positively homely teacher, one who will stay on the job, while the ardent would-be swains are just as warmly espousing the cause of beauty.

Bert Hall, of the Vancouver Champions, is entitled to a place among the notable performers of the Northwestern League in 1914. Up to the close of the regular season he had pitched fifty-four consecutive innings with only one run scored against him. September 15th, pitching against Seattle, he added eight and one-third more innings to this number, making his record sixty-two and one-third consecutive innings with only one run. This appears to be a record for the present Northwestern League, and there are no figures available to controvert it in the Pacific Northwest circuit, which ended in 1903. Over in Idaho they have a little on them in this line of talk, as it will be recalled Walter Johnson, when he was with the Weiser club, pitched seventy-five consecutive innings without yielding a run.

From the Cumberland Mountains of Pike County, Eastern Kentucky, comes the story of an old mountaineer who attended his own funeral services, being carried to the log cabin meeting house to listen to the words of the evangelist who travels through the mountains. Jud Maerson, a typical mountaineer, living in one of the wildest sections, some distance from Elkhorn City, became ill and feared no funeral services would follow his death. Therefore when the exhorter made his periodical trip through the hills he requested that his funeral be held. The day was appointed and the mountain people from miles around flocked to the log cabin church. Maerson, who had been failing fast, was much improved on the day of the funeral and was carried to the church. The obsequies, as is often the case in the mountains, were made a gala occasion, after the services an old-fashioned dance being held.

INTERESTING ARTICLES

AN INDIAN WILLIAM TELL.

Before the coming of the white man to this country, there lived in the region of what is now Florida a tribe of Indians. This tribe was ruled by Newakeum, a chief whose renown as a master of the bow and arrow had spread over the entire peninsula. He had many sons, but he loved Nogani the best of all. The tribe lived in peace and tranquillity on the game brought in by Newakeum and his braves.

But in the year 1537 there came a change. White men, mostly Spaniards, led by Ferdinand de Soto, came to the village of Newakeum. From the first they looked on the Indians as inferiors and treated them as such, and this was returned by a deep hatred on the part of the red men. Accordingly, when one insolent fellow insulted a native, there arose a quarrel, in which he was killed. De Soto demanded reparation.

Now, among these white men, there was a certain Rudolf of Switzerland, a brother of the man who was killed. Going to his chief, he demanded the life of one of the sons of Newakeum. De Soto said to him: "Let us serve these savages as the Austrians served that famous William Tell of your country. We will have the chief kill his own son."

Rudolf told Newakeum of his general's plan, which was to happen on the morrow. He, going to De Soto, said that he would consent if they would leave his village and go on their journey. De Soto agreed.

On the next day Newakeum bade his son to be brave and to stand perfectly motionless, as he would hit the fruit and not touch him. Nogani, knowing his father's skill, promised to do so. Then, when all was ready, Newakeum bent the bow and shot the arrow, which cleft the fruit on Nogani's head. De Soto lived up to his promise and with his followers left the country and Newakeum never heard of him again.

CHRISTMAS TOYS MADE IN AMERICA.

One Milwaukee concern is doing its best to avert a Christmas toy famine threatened through the failure this year of the "made in Germany" crop. It is a hobby horse factory which is turning out something like 500 hobby horses a day besides a large output of other sorts of toys. It ships over 15,000 rocking horses a year, the majority of them to points inside the United States.

The rocking horse as it first appears in the factory is merely a round cedar block, the log being cut in horse lengths. The block is clamped into a turning lathe and in a short time it is taken out the exact shape of the complete body, minus the head and legs. Hundreds of these legless and headless bodies stacked into great piles present a grotesque appearance. But after heads, legs, manes and tails are fastened on and the body painted and mottled they are quite rightly

Milwaukee also has several factories which turn out quantities of doll buggies and other toys. Doll carriages are made here in all kinds, from the little inexpensive go-cart to the 1914 model cars large enough for a life-size baby, and with the same springs and other details of construction.

In other factories are made writing desks, bookcases, doll dresses and chairs for boys and girls.

"In 1913," said a manufacturer, "the importation of toys from Germany was valued at wholesale rates at \$8,856,575. The factories of the United States produced playthings worth about \$8,264,000. Eliminating such articles as sleds, velocipedes, etc., the American output of what we makers call real toys was not much more than \$1,000,000. The market in low-priced mechanical toys must come to a standstill. We cannot compete in this country with the cheap German goods. I do not mean the really good mechanical toys; those we can and shall make in America; I mean the kind you buy on the street for five and ten cents."

A WOODPECKER'S STOREHOUSE.

A section of a telegraph pole that stood recently along one of the railroads near the Pacific Coast has been fairly riddled and honeycombed on its four sides by thousands of holes pecked and bored out by the California woodpecker. Of course, these numerous cavities weakened and destroyed the usefulness of the pole, which had to be cut down and replaced by a new one. The damaged telegraph pole is the result of the wisdom and foresight of this smart little bird who is able to see far beyond the end of his bill. It was occasioned by the problem of food and a practical knowledge of the necessity of laying something by for a rainy day. When autumn leaves begin to fall and hints of frost are in the atmosphere the woodpecker puts in his spare moments hiding fat, juicy acorns in nice little cavities pecked out by himself in pine trees. If these are scarce in the particular region of his habitat a high telegraph pole is considered ideal for a safe storage plant.

Though practically hidden from outside interference, these food store-houses are not beyond the reach of certain pilfering enemies of the bird and animal world, such as the jays, magpies and squirrels. To be on the guard against these robbers, the bird bores a deep cavity sufficient to take in his whole body, and there he stations himself to guard against any approaching marauders and trespassers. In consequence, there are numerous battles, and the ordinarily well-disposed and peaceful woodpecker, among its kind, becomes a vigorous fighter and all intruders are attacked and driven away in a hurry. During the spring and summer the food supply of the woodpecker consists of fruits, berries and to a great extent of various insects. From its destruction of the young larvae and many insect pests, the bird is looked upon as of considerable economic value in the community.

NAME CARDS

The newest fall in picture names. They are beautifully photographed in a variety of colors and have various names, such as Harry, Edith, etc., printed on the reverse side. Just the thing to mail to your friends. Price 6 for 10 cents.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

VANISHING AND RE-APPEARING EGG.—Very fine, easy to perform and it produces a marvelous and mystifying effect. Egg is made to appear and vanish right before the eyes. Beautifully made. Price, 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

SURPRISE LETTER DRUM.

Stung! That was one on you! The joke? You send a friend a letter. He opens it, and that releases the drum. Instantly the sheet of note paper begins to bang and thump furiously, with a ripping, tearing sound. Guaranteed to make a man with iron nerves almost jump out of his skin. You can catch the sharp st wisenheimer with this one. Don't miss getting a few. Price, 6c. each by mail.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

The Bottle Imp.

The peculiarity of this little bottle is that it cannot be made to lie down, and yet by simply passing the hand over it, the performer causes it to do so. This trick affords great amusement, and is of convenient size to carry about.

Price, 10c.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

SNAP BACK MATCH SAFE.

Just out! A trick match safe. It is a beautifully nickelled box, of the size to hold matches. But when your friend presses the spring to take out a match, the lid flies back, and pinches his finger just hard enough to startle without hurting him. This is a dandy!

Price, 15c. each by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE PEG JUMPER.

A very effective pocket trick, easily to be performed by any one. A miniature paddle is shown. Central holes are drilled through it. A wooden peg is inside of the upper hole. Showing now both sides of the paddle, the performer causes, by simply breathing upon it, the peg to leave the upper hole, and appear in the middle one. Then it jumps to the lower hole, back to the middle one, and lastly to the upper hole. Both sides of the paddle are repeatedly shown.

Price by mail, 15c.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

MAGIC COINER.

A mystifying and amusing trick. Tin blanks are placed under the little tin cup and apparently coined into dimes. A real money-maker. Price, 20c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE DISAPPEARING CIGAR.

A new and startling trick. You ask a friend if he will have a cigar; if he says yes (which is usually the case), you take from your pocket an ordinary cigar, and hand it to him. As he reaches out for it, the cigar mysteriously disappears right before his eyes, leaving him in amazement. You can apologize, you are very sorry, but that it was the last cigar you had, and the chances are that you will have to smoke with him and tell him the secret. It is not a magic trick, but the cigar actually disappears, and it is impossible to find it. A wonderful illusion.

Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c. by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

NOISY HANDKERCHIEF.



A great deal of amusement may be had with this little article. It imitates the blowing of the nose exactly, except that the noise is magnified at least a dozen times, and sounds like the bass-horn in a German band. This device is used by simply placing it between the teeth and blowing. The harder the blow the louder the noise. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

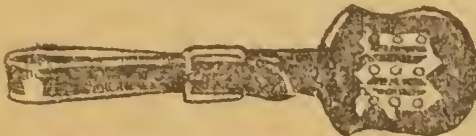
JAPANESE TWIRLER.



A wonderful imported paper novelty. By a simple manipulation of the wooden handles a number of beautiful figures can be produced. It takes on several combinations of magnificent colors. Price, 10c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

INITIAL WATCH FOB.



It has a neat enameled black strap, and small secure buckle, with a patent catch so that no watch can slip off. The handsome tortoise shell pendants are beautifully engraved with any initial you desire. The letter is fire gilt, cannot rub off, and is studded with nine Barrires diamonds. These fobs are the biggest value ever offered. Price, 25c. each, by mail, postpaid.

FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

THE AUTOMATIC RUNNING MOUSE



This mouse is so nearly a perfect imitation of the live animal as to not only deceive the ladies, but to even deceive the cat. Inside each mouse is a set of clock work which you wind up with a key, then place the mouse on the floor and it will run rapidly in every direction in a circle across the floor backward and forward as if to get away. Suddenly set it agoging in a room where there are ladies, and you will have the fun of hearing them scream and jump upon the chairs to escape the little rodent. This mechanical mouse is well worth 50c., but we will sell it for 30c., and send it by mail postpaid.

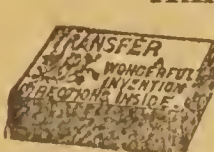
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



'KNOCK-OUT' CARD TRICK.—Five cards are shown, front and back, and there are no two cards alike. You place some of them in a handkerchief and ask any person to hold them by the corners in full view of the audience. You now take the remaining cards and request anyone to name any card shown. This done, you repeat the name of the card and state that you will cause it to invisibly leave your hand and pass into the handkerchief, where it will be found among the other cards. At the word "Go!" you show that the chosen card has vanished, leaving absolutely only two cards. The handkerchief is unfolded by any person, and in it is found the identical card. Price, 10c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

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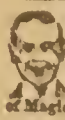
With this remarkable invention any one can transfer pictures or engravings from newspapers or books, and make perfect copies of butterfly and moth wings for scrap books. It is the dry transfer process, cleanly, handy and reliable, and the results secured will astonish you. Transfer is a gelatinous substance put up in cakes, one of which is enclosed with a wooden rubber and full directions for producing pictures. It requiring but a few moments to make the transfer. Any picture in the newspapers can be speedily reproduced in your album, or elsewhere, a perfect copy being made, and several copies can be made from the same picture. Butterfly and moth wings can also be pictured, all the beautiful colors and markings on the wings being transferred, and thus an interesting and instructive collection of insect forms can be made and permanently preserved in a scrap book. Both young and old will take delight in using Transfer, and the price is so low that all can afford to have this new process at command. Price only 10c., 3 for 25c.; one dozen, 75c. by mail postpaid.

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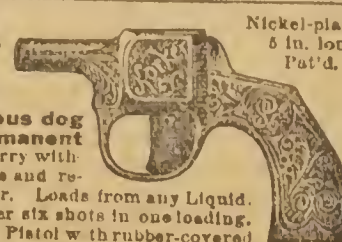


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JUMPING CARD.—A

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H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

PIGGY IN A COFFIN.



This is a wicked pig that died at an early age, and here he is in his coffin ready for burial. There will be a great many mourners at his funeral, for this coffin, pretty as it looks, is very tricky, and the man who gets it open will feel real grief. The coffin is made of metal, perfectly shaped and beautifully lacquered. The trick is to open it to see the pig. The man that tries it gets his fingers and feelings hurt, and piggy comes out to grant at his victims. The tubular end of the coffin, which everyone (in trying to open) presses inward, contains a needle which stabs the victim in his thumb or finger every time. This is the latest and a very "impressive" trick. It can be opened easily by anyone in the secret, and as a neat catch-joke to save yourself from a bore is unsurpassed. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c., postpaid; one dozen by express, 75c.

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This little novelty creates a world of laughter. Its chief attractiveness is that it takes a few seconds before leaping high in the air, so that when set, very innocently along side of an unsuspecting person, he is suddenly startled by the wonderful activity of this frog. Price, 15c. each by mail postpaid.

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MICROSCOPE.



By use of this wonderful little microscope you can magnify a drop of stagnant water until you see dozens of crawling insects; is also useful for inspecting grain, pork, linen, and numerous other articles. This little instrument does equally as good work as the best microscopes and is invaluable to the household. Is made of best finished brass; size when closed 1x2½ inches. Price, 30c.

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THE FOUNTAIN RING.



A handsome ring connected with a rubber ball which is concealed in the palm of the hand. A gentle squeeze forces water or cologne in the face of the victim while he is examining it. The ball can be instantly filled by immersing ring in water same as a fountain pen filler. Price by mail, postpaid, 12c. each.

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A startling and pleasing illusion! "The ways of the world are devious," says Matthew Arnold, but the ways of the Lightning Trick Box when properly handled are admitted to be puzzling and uncertain. You take off the lid and show your friends that it is full of nice candy. Replace the lid, when you can solemnly assure your friends that you can instantly empty the box in their presence without opening it; and taking off the lid again, sure enough the candy has disappeared. Or you can change the candy into a piece of money by following the directions sent with each box. This is the neatest and best cheap trick ever invented.

Price, only 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

WIZARD'S PACK OF TRICK CARDS.



A full pack of 52 cards, but by the aid of the instructions given, anyone can perform the most wonderful tricks. Many of the feats exhibited are truly marvelous, and astonish and amuse a whole audience. Positively no sleight-of-hand. The whole trick is in the cards. Price, 35c. by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

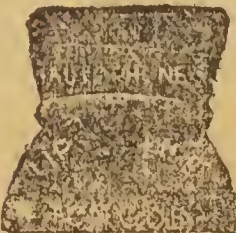
TRICK PUZZLE PURSE.



The first attempt usually made to open it, is to press down the little knob in the center of the purse, when a small needle runs out and stabs them in the finger, but does not open it. You can open it before their eyes and still they will be unable to open it.

Price, 25c. each by mail, postpaid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE AUTOPHONE.



A small musical instrument that produces very sweet musical notes by placing it between the lips with the tongue over the edge, and blowing gently into the instrument. The notes produced are not unlike those of the flute and flute. We send full printed instructions whereby anyone can play anything they can hum, whistle or sing, with very little practice. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed, postpaid.

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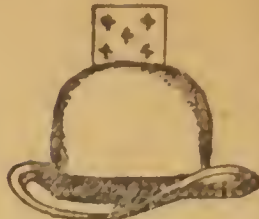
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CARD THROUGH THE HAT TRICK



With this trick you borrow a hat, and apparently show a card up through the crown, without showing the card or hat. The operation can be repeated. The performer merely pushing the card down through the crown into the hat again. It is a trick which will puzzle and interest the closest observer and detection is almost impossible. It is so simple that a child can learn how to perform it in a few minutes.

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SURPRISE KINEMATOGRAPH.



The greatest hit of the season! It consists of a small metal, nicked tube, with a lens eye view, which shows a pretty ballet girl in tights. Hand it to a friend, who will be delighted with the first picture; tell him to turn the screw in center of instrument to change the views, when a stream of water squirts into his face, much to his disgust. Anyone who has not seen this kinematograph in operation is sure to be caught every time. The instrument can be refilled with water in an instant, ready for the next customer.

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This is one of the greatest musical instruments ever invented. It is made entirely of metal and is almost invisible when in use. With it, in a few moments, you can learn to play all kinds of tunes, have lots of fun, please and amuse your friends and make some money, too. Fine for either song or piano accompaniment or by itself alone. You place the whistlephone in the mouth with half circle out, place end of tongue to rounded part and blow gently as if to cool the lips. A few trials will enable one to play any tune or air.

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LOOK!

LOOK!

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